Creating Equitable, Healthy, and Sustainable Communities
Strategies for Advancing Smart Growth, Environmental Justice, and Equitable Development (Working Title)

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Executive Summary

Communities across the country are integrating smart growth and environmental justice approaches to achieve development that is healthy, sustainable, and equitable. Overburdened communities are using smart growth strategies to address longstanding environmental and health challenges and create new opportunities in their neighborhoods. At the same time, regional and local planners are engaging low-income, minority, and tribal residents in decision-making and producing more enduring development that is better for the environment and the community.

This report aims to build on past successes and offer other low-income, minority, and tribal communities approaches to implement their own versions of equitable development. It is also a resource for local and regional decision-makers and developers beginning the process of working with overburdened communities to revitalize their neighborhoods. The report identifies strategies that bring together smart growth and environmental justice principles and goals to create healthy, sustainable, and equitable communities. These are places that provide clean air, water, and land; homes working families can afford; safe, reliable, and economical transportation options; and convenient access to jobs, schools, parks, shopping, and other destinations.

Challenges to Equitable, Healthy, and Sustainable Communities

Low-income, minority, and tribal communities face an array of challenges, many of which are related to how their neighborhoods and regions are planned and developed. For example, many such communities:

- Are located in close proximity to polluting facilities such as landfills, power plants, incinerators, chemical plants, smelters, and refineries, all of which can cause a variety of health impacts.
- Live in neighborhoods with fewer jobs or educational opportunities; inadequate infrastructure and services; and lacking important amenities such as health clinics, open space, and places to buy healthy food.
- Do not have access to cars, high-quality public transportation, or safe places to walk or bicycle.
- Face the risk of displacement from their homes when new investments contribute to rising property values.
- Have difficulty engaging in decision-making due to a lack of transparency in public processes, inattention to language and educational differences, and other factors.

Strategies Linking Smart Growth, Environmental Justice, and Equitable Development

Smart growth, environmental justice, and equitable development approaches can be an effective combination for responding to the challenges faced by overburdened communities, promoting development that is equitable and environmentally sustainable, and laying the foundation for economic resilience. This publication describes a set of strategies that link the

three fields and can be used by low-income, minority, tribal, and overburdened communities to shape development where they live. Strategies are grouped under seven common elements that connect smart growth, environmental justice, and equitable development:

- *Facilitate meaningful community engagement in land use decisions.* Meaningful community participation in land use planning and decision-making can produce development that meets the needs of a diverse group of residents, build broad support for projects, and lead to more effective public processes.
    - Sample strategy: **Conducting community assessments** help residents gather, analyze, and report information about current conditions and needs related to priority issues, such as street safety for pedestrians.
- *Promote public health and a clean and safe environment.* Environmental justice strategies seek to reduce exposure to harmful pollutants and improve health and the environment in overburdened communities. Likewise, smart growth principles encourage developing in existing communities, preserving open space, cleaning up brownfields, and creating walkable neighborhoods, all of which protect the environment and public health.
    - Sample strategy: Planning and zoning tools can help **reduce exposure to hazardous land uses** and mitigate the impacts of polluting facilities on surrounding communities.
- *Strengthen existing communities.* Reinvesting in existing cities, suburbs, and small towns rather than building new neighborhoods in outlying areas can help address health and safety hazards, bring new opportunities to residents, and save communities money by making use of prior investments in infrastructure.
    - Sample strategy: Approaches that encourage **fixing existing infrastructure first** prioritize the repair and maintenance of existing infrastructure over the building of new infrastructure in undeveloped places.
- *Provide housing choices.* Offering an array of housing options allows residents of all income levels to live near jobs, services, and public transit; helps to minimize displacement; and reduces transportation costs and air pollution from long commutes.
    - Sample strategy: **Creating new affordable housing** using tools like inclusionary zoning, updated land use regulations, and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits can expand housing choices for low- and moderate-income families in neighborhoods where redevelopment is occurring.
- *Provide transportation options.* Providing equitable and affordable transportation options improves mobility and access to opportunities for all residents, including those who do not own cars.
    - Sample strategy: **Providing access to public transportation** through inclusive schedule and route planning and thoughtful transit stop and street design connects people to regional jobs and services.
- *Improve access to opportunities and amenities.* All residents, regardless of race, ethnicity, or economic status, should have access to the basic ingredients for healthy, productive lives, including employment and educational opportunities; services such as

health clinics and child care; and amenities such as grocery stores, safe streets, and parks and recreational facilities.
    - Sample strategy: Programs that **create Safe Routes to School** improve childrens' health by making it possible for them to walk or bicycle to school.
- *Preserve the features that make a community distinctive.* Using planning and land use tools to protect a community's distinctive physical and cultural features and strengthen them through future development can preserve neighborhood character, build local pride, and contribute to economic growth.
    - Sample strategy: Tools such as design guidelines, neighborhood conservation districts, and neighborhood compatibility standards can **create new development that strengthens local culture**.

Taken together or in part, the strategies outlined in this document can help low-income, minority, tribal, and overburdened communities shape development to respond to their needs and reflect their values. These strategies can also help local and regional planners and policymakers make land use decisions that are equitable, healthy, and sustainable for all residents.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Communities across the country are integrating smart growth and environmental justice approaches to achieve development that is healthy, sustainable, and equitable. Residents of Spartanburg, South Carolina partnered with federal agencies, the local government, and private foundations to create new housing, parks, businesses, and health clinics where brownfields, landfills, and abandoned buildings once existed. In New Orleans' Versailles neighborhood, the community came together after Hurricane Katrina to rebuild its main business corridor and strengthen the neighborhood's sense of place, which is built around Vietnamese culture. On the Ohkay Owingeh reservation in New Mexico, tribal leaders are implementing a Master Land Use Plan that creates affordable housing, preserves valuable water resources, and revives traditional Pueblo settlement patterns and historic plazas. Bethel New Life, a faith-based community development corporation on Chicago's West Side, formed a regional coalition to preserve transit service in the predominantly African-American neighborhood and led the construction of shops, child care facilities, an employment center, and energy-efficient and affordable homes around a train station.

These diverse communities and many others are finding that environmental justice and smart growth can be an effective combination for promoting a clean and safe environment, a strong economy, and good quality of life for all residents. Overburdened[1] communities are using smart growth strategies to address long-standing environmental and health challenges and create new opportunities in their neighborhoods. At the same time, regional and local planners are engaging low-income, minority, and tribal residents in decision-making and producing more enduring development that is better for the environment and the community.

This report aims to build on the successes described above and help other low-income, minority, tribal, and overburdened communities implement their own versions of equitable development. It identifies approaches that bring together smart growth and environmental justice principles and goals and can be used by community-based organizations, local and regional decision-makers, developers, and other stakeholders to build healthy, sustainable, and equitable communities. These are places that provide clean air, water, and land; affordable and healthy homes; safe, reliable, and economical transportation options; and convenient access to jobs, schools, parks, shopping, and other amenities and services.

Text box:
Without the appropriate engagement and planning, the implementation of smart growth strategies in low-income and minority communities can cause the displacement of existing residents due to rising rents and other costs of living. This unintended consequence has caused some environmental justice and equity proponents to question smart growth's inclusivity, and has contributed to a divide between smart growth and environmental justice. However, some

[1] In Plan EJ 2014, EPA uses the term "overburdened" to describe the minority, low-income, tribal, and indigenous populations or communities in the United States that potentially experience disproportionate environmental harms and risks as a result of greater vulnerability to environmental hazards. This increased vulnerability may be attributable to an accumulation of negative and a lack of positive environmental, health, economic, or social conditions within these populations or communities.

communities have worked hard to bridge that divide, and have found that a wide range of tools and strategies exist to engage community members in neighborhood planning and visioning, provide affordable homes and transportation choices, support local businesses, and minimize displacement in other ways. Many of them are described in this publication.

"For too long, environmental justice and smart growth have been viewed as separate, yet communities across the U.S. are showing that they are actually complementary. Bringing them together can help community-based organizations, local planners, and other decision-makers achieve healthy and sustainable communities for all Americans, regardless of race, ethnicity, or economic status." –Lisa Garcia, Associate Assistant Administrator for Environmental Justice, EPA

Core Concepts

Environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development goals and principles have fundamental areas of overlap. They all aim to create communities that are healthy, environmentally sustainable, and economically vibrant. They also seek to empower residents to shape development where they live. This section introduces the three fields.

Environmental justice

The environmental justice movement emerged in the 1980s when minority, low-income, and tribal communities began to organize in response to disproportionate environmental and health impacts in their neighborhoods such as hazardous facility siting, industrial contamination, air pollution, and lead poisoning. In 1982, residents of poor, predominantly African American Warren County, North Carolina protested the siting of a landfill, focusing national attention on this issue and sparking action in other communities. Subsequently, empirical studies have shown that environmental burdens are disproportionately located in minority, low-income, and tribal communities.[2]

The environmental justice movement influenced federal policy by securing the establishment of EPA's Office of Environmental Justice in the early 1990s. The EPA defines environmental justice as "the fair treatment and meaningful involvement of all people regardless of race, color, national origin, or income with respect to the development, implementation, and enforcement of environmental laws, regulations, and policies."[3]

"Fair treatment" means that no group of people should bear a disproportionate share of the negative environmental consequences resulting from industrial, governmental, or commercial operations and policies.[4] Over the years, EPA and environmental justice organizations have

[2] Numerous studies on disproportionate environmental impacts have been conducted since the 1980s. A major compilation of the state of the science in environmental justice and environmental health disparities was published by the *American Journal of Public Health* in December 2011. See "Environmental Justice and Disparities in Environmental Health," *American Journal of Public Health*, December 2011, Volume 101, S1.
[3] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Environmental Justice Basic Information. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej.
[4] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Environmental Justice Basic Information. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej.

expanded the concept of fair treatment to consider not only how burdens are distributed, but also how environmental and health benefits are shared.[5] In other words, all people, regardless of race, ethnicity, or economic status, should have the opportunity to enjoy the positive outcomes of environmentally related decisions and actions, such as cleaner air and water, improved health, and economic vitality. This is similar to equitable development, described below.

"Meaningful involvement" means that the public should have opportunities to participate in decisions that could affect their environment and their health, their contributions should be taken into account by regulatory agencies, and decision-makers should seek out and facilitate the engagement of those potentially affected by their decisions.[6] Building on its roots in the civil rights movement, the environmental justice movement seeks to empower communities to speak for themselves.

EPA places particular emphasis on the public health and environmental conditions affecting minority, low-income, and tribal populations, as they frequently bear greater environmental harms and risks than the general population[7] and often lack access to environmental benefits. Accordingly, this report focuses on minority, low-income, tribal, and other overburdened communities.

Environmental justice is being put into action by federal, tribal, state, and local government agencies and organizations. A key driver for EPA is Plan EJ 2014, the agency's overarching strategy for advancing environmental justice. The plan seeks to empower communities to improve their health and environments and establish partnerships between governments and other stakeholder groups.[8] Plan EJ 2014 marks the 20th anniversary of the signing of Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," which instructed federal agencies to address disproportionately high and adverse health or environmental effects of their programs on low-income, minority, and tribal communities.[9] The Executive Order also created the Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice to guide, support, and enhance federal environmental justice and community-based activities. As part of this effort, 17 federal agencies have committed to developing and implementing environmental justice strategies. To inform these strategies and engage communities, the agencies held listening sessions around the country in 2011.[10]

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[5] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *EPA's Action Development Process: Interim Guidance on Considering Environmental Justice During the Development of an Action.* 2010. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej/resources/policy/considering-ej-in-rulemaking-guide-07-2010.pdf.

[6] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Environmental Justice Basic Information. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej.

[7] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Symposium on the Science of Disproportionate Environmental Health Impacts. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej/multimedia/albums/epa/disproportionate-impacts-symposium.html.

[8] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Plan EJ 2014*. 2011. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej/resources/policy/plan-ej-2014/plan-ej-2011-09.pdf.

[9] Clinton, William J., Executive Order 12898, "Federal Actions to Address Environmental Justice in Minority Populations and Low-Income Populations," February 11, 1994, *Federal Register* 59, No. 32: 7629.

[10] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej/interagency/index.html.

Smart growth

Smart growth describes a range of strategies for planning and building cities, suburbs, and small towns in ways that protect the environment and public health, support economic development, and strengthen communities. In 1996, the Smart Growth Network, a group of more than 30 national organizations representing a range of interests, created 10 smart growth principles based on the experiences of communities around the country. The principles are:

- Mix land uses. Mixing housing, shops, offices, schools, and other compatible land uses in the same neighborhood makes it easy for residents to walk, bicycle, take public transportation, and reach different destinations conveniently and affordably.
- Take advantage of compact building design. Compact building design preserves open space and uses land and resources more efficiently. It creates neighborhoods that can easily be served by public transit, puts destinations close enough for people to walk between, and protects water quality by reducing the amount of paved surfaces and polluted runoff.
- Create a range of housing opportunities and choices. Providing an array of quality housing options in new developments and existing neighborhoods allows people of all income levels, household sizes, and stages of life to live near jobs, public transit, and services.
- Create walkable neighborhoods. Creating safe and inviting pedestrian spaces, mixing land uses, and building compactly make walking a viable transportation option, reducing transportation costs, encouraging physical activity, and helping to reduce obesity, diabetes, and other diseases.
- Foster distinctive, attractive communities with a strong sense of place. Development should represent the values and the unique history, culture, economy, and geography of a community. Preserving and building on community assets are key to long-term quality of life and economic vitality.
- Preserve open space, farmland, natural beauty, and critical environmental areas. Farmland, pastures, forests, and other natural and working lands support land-based economic activities that are critical for healthy regional and national economies. They also protect the environment and public health by filtering pollutants from the air and drinking water.
- Strengthen and direct development towards existing communities. Investing in existing communities helps to address environmental and health hazards like contaminated properties, brings new jobs and services for residents, and saves localities money by utilizing the infrastructure already in place.
- Provide a variety of transportation choices. A balanced transportation system that incorporates many means of travel—including buses, rail, walking, biking, and private cars—provides more affordable options for getting around, reduces air

pollution and associated health impacts, and increases mobility for citizens who do not drive.

- Make development decisions predictable, fair, and cost effective. By making development processes clear and by working with the private sector, municipalities can make smart growth economically viable and attractive to private investors and developers.
- Encourage community and stakeholder collaboration in development decisions. Development can create great places to live, work, and play if it responds to a community's sense of how and where it wants to grow. Smart growth involves residents, businesses, and all other stakeholders early and often to define and implement the community's vision and goals.[11]

The principles create the foundation for strategies that cities, suburbs, small towns, and rural areas can use to create efficient development that is environmentally and economically sustainable and provides more opportunities and amenities for residents. Each community can adapt smart growth strategies and techniques to meet their needs. Smart growth development will look different in different places depending on each community's context and priorities.

Equitable development

The concept of equitable development integrates environmental justice and smart growth in the revitalization of underserved neighborhoods, incorporating a range of elements that strengthen quality of life including housing and transportation choice; environmental and health protection; and educational, cultural, and spiritual opportunities.[12] There is no single definition of equitable development, but it is commonly understood to mean that all residents should be protected from environmental hazards and enjoy access to environmental, health, economic, and social benefits such as clean air and water, adequate infrastructure, job opportunities, and involvement in decision-making.

Equitable development approaches generally integrate people-focused strategies—efforts that support community residents and families—with place-focused strategies—those that stabilize and improve the neighborhood environment. They promote public and private investments that offer fair financial returns for investors and bring benefits for residents, such as jobs, affordable homes, and a clean environment. Equitable development requires meaningful community participation, leadership, and ownership in change efforts. It also calls for a regional perspective to reduce disparities among localities and improve outcomes for low-income communities while building healthy metropolitan regions. Equitable development aims to ensure that all communities can benefit from economic growth in their regions, with high-

[11] Smart Growth Network. Why Smart Growth? http://smartgrowth.org/why.php.
[12] New Partners for Smart Growth Conference, Equitable Development Workshop. February 2010.

performing schools, affordable housing in attractive neighborhoods, living wage jobs, and public transit and important amenities evenly available.[13]

Text box: "Healthy communities are not only environmentally healthy, they are also socially and economically strong. They offer employment and educational opportunities, safe and affordable homes, access to recreation, health care, and other needs of daily life, all close enough together that people can choose to safely walk, bike, or take transit instead of driving." –Lisa P. Jackson, EPA Administrator

[13] Glover Blackwell, Angela and Fox, Radhika K. "Regional Equity and Smart Growth: Opportunities for Advancing Social and Economic Justice in America." Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities. 2004. www.fundersnetwork.org/files/learn/Regional_Equity_and_Smart_Growth_2nd_Ed.pdf.

Chapter 2: Challenges to Equitable, Healthy, and Sustainable Communities

Text box: "All too often, low-income, minority and tribal Americans live in the shadows of the worst pollution, facing disproportionate health impacts and greater obstacles to economic growth in communities that cannot attract businesses and new jobs." –EPA Administrator Lisa P. Jackson

Low-income, minority, and tribal communities face an array of challenges. Many continue to face the types of polluting facilities and lack of access to decision-making that sparked the environmental justice movement decades ago. Others, whose neighborhoods have been cleared of contaminated sites and are attracting new development, are confronting rising costs of living and displacement. The challenges described in this chapter are wide-ranging, touching on issues of health, community engagement, economic resilience, and access to opportunities and services. However, they are all related to how communities are planned and developed. The next chapter provides smart growth and environmental justice strategies and policies that can help address these challenges.

Health Concerns

Polluting facilities and their health impacts

Low-income, minority, and tribal communities have historically borne a disproportionate share of environmental harms and risks and are more likely to live in areas that increase these risks.[14,15] Because they often possess fewer economic resources, wield less political clout, and live where land is inexpensive, industries that discharge pollution might find it easier to locate near these populations than in other areas. As a result, many low-income, minority, and tribal communities coexist with the most noxious of neighbors: landfills, incinerators, chemical plants, smelters, refineries, and other hazardous facilities.

Proximity to these facilities brings exposure to environmental contamination—most notably air and water pollution—which can have serious health impacts. For instance, people who live near goods movement facilities—freight transportation locations such as seaports, rail yards, and warehouses—can be exposed to elevated levels of air toxics emitted by diesel-powered vehicles and equipment. These pollutants contribute to respiratory illness, heart disease, cancer, and premature death.[16]

Even when polluting facilities are closed down, they can continue to affect surrounding neighborhoods. They often leave behind contaminated sites that can pose health threats to

[14] United Church of Christ. *Toxic Wastes and Race*. 1987.
[15] United Church of Christ. *Toxic Wastes and Race at Twenty*. 2007.
[16] National Environmental Justice Advisory Council. *Reducing Air Emissions Associated with Goods Movement: Working Towards Environmental Justice.* 2009. www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/resources/publications/nejac/2009-goods-movement.pdf.

nearby residents from polluted water and soil. These problems can present barriers to redevelopment.

These site-specific risks can be compounded by the fact that many minority communities live in regions that do not meet federal air or water quality standards.[17,18] Exposure to air pollutants[19] as well as bacteria, parasites, and other contaminants in drinking water can cause disease and even death.[20]

Unhealthy housing

Low-income, minority, and tribal populations are more likely to live in unhealthy housing with indoor air pollution, lead paint, asbestos, mold, and mildew.[21] Lead poisoning causes permanent brain damage that leads to impaired mental abilities, and high levels of exposure can cause seizures, behavioral disorders, and death. Mold and mildew can cause allergic reactions and exacerbate asthma, and asbestos is associated with cancer.[22]

Physical inactivity and chronic disease

Research indicates that low-income populations engage in less physical activity than the general population,[23] and some minorities are less likely than other groups to get enough daily physical activity.[24] These trends can be related in part to how communities and streets are designed, which has a direct effect on residents' ability to be active. Underserved neighborhoods might not have sidewalks, crosswalks, parks, or recreational facilities. They might also lack stores, schools, and other amenities and services within walking distance of homes. Vacant buildings, poorly lit streets, crime, and other factors that make residents feel unsafe may prevent them from walking or bicycling or allowing their children to play outside or walk to school.

[17] American Lung Association. *State of Lung Disease in Diverse Communities.* 2010. www.lungusa.org/assets/documents/publications/lung-disease-data/solddc_2010.pdf.
[18] Quintero-Somaini, Adrianna and Quirindongo, Mayra. *Hidden Danger: Environmental Health Threats in the Latino Community.* Natural Resources Defense Council. 2004. www.nrdc.org/health/effects/latino/english/contents.asp.
[19] American Lung Association. *State of Lung Disease in Diverse Communities*. 2010. www.lungusa.org/assets/documents/publications/lung-disease-data/solddc_2010.pdf.
[20] Quintero-Somaini, Adrianna and Quirindongo, Mayra. *Hidden Danger: Environmental Health Threats in the Latino Community.* Natural Resources Defense Council. 2004. www.nrdc.org/health/effects/latino/english/contents.asp.
[21] Alliance for Healthy Homes. Disparities in Risk. www.afhh.org/chil_ar/chil_ar_disparities.htm.
[22] American Lung Association. *State of Lung Disease in Diverse Communities*. 2010. www.lungusa.org/assets/documents/publications/lung-disease-data/solddc_2010.pdf.
[23] Active Living by Design. *Low Income Populations and Physical Activity.* Undated. www.healthtrust.org/pdf/PhysicalActivityforLowIncomePopulations-TheHealthTrust.pdf.
[24] PolicyLink and the Prevention Institute. *The Transportation Prescription.* Undated. www.policylink.org/site/apps/nlnet/content2.aspx?c=lkIXLbMNJrE&b=5136581&ct=7290885.

The links between physical activity and health are well established. A sedentary lifestyle can contribute to obesity, heart disease, and Type 2 diabetes, illnesses that disproportionately affect minority communities.[25,26,27]

Inadequate nutrition

Low-income, minority, and tribal populations might have difficulty maintaining a well-balanced diet not only due to financial circumstances, but also because of inadequate access to fresh, affordable, and healthy food. Many underserved neighborhoods lack supermarkets, compelling residents without transportation options to shop at convenience stores with high prices and a limited selection of nutritious items.

Cumulative health impacts

The many physical, chemical, biological, social, and cultural factors faced by overburdened populations can combine to increase their exposure to environmental toxins, make them more susceptible to these toxins, and reduce their ability to recover from exposure. These factors can include pre-existing health conditions, lack of access to health care and insurance, poor nutrition, lack of information about environmental and health issues, lack of exercise, and many others.[28,29]

Disinvestment in Established Communities

Dispersed development patterns

After World War II, development in the United States spread from cities and older suburbs to the fringes of metropolitan areas and beyond. This trend was promoted by public policies that encouraged building new homes and roads rather than investing in existing communities, and fueled by a variety of economic and cultural factors. As these far-flung developments expanded, many of the older communities became increasingly poor, with growing concentrations of minorities. Their transportation and water infrastructure were not adequately maintained, municipal services were reduced, and brownfields and other contaminated and vacant sites increased. Facing falling property values, some residents abandoned their homes and housing stock deteriorated. Businesses also began moving to the

[25] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Obesity Data/Statistics. minorityhealth.hhs.gov/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=3&lvlid=550.
[26] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Heart Disease Data/Statistics. minorityhealth.hhs.gov/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=3&lvlid=127.
[27] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Diabetes Data/Statistics. minorityhealth.hhs.gov/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=3&lvlid=62.
[28] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *EPA's Action Development Process: Interim Guidance on Considering Environmental Justice During the Development of an Action.* 2010. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej/resources/policy/considering-ej-in-rulemaking-guide-07-2010.pdf.
[29] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Symposium on the Science of Disproportionate Environmental Health Impacts. www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/multimedia/albums/epa/disproportionate-impacts-symposium.html.

edges of metropolitan regions, making it harder for the residents of disinvested neighborhoods to earn a living. Jobs in the suburbs were often inaccessible to them because public transportation did not connect urban and suburban areas. As a result, unemployment and poverty in older communities grew. At the same time, exclusionary zoning practices in some newer neighborhoods limited the construction of small, multifamily, and rental homes, making these places unaffordable to lower-income residents.

Disinvestment and spread-out development patterns have affected rural and tribal communities as well. In many rural areas, the decline of agriculture and manufacturing has led to unemployment and poverty. As young people move away, populations age, and employers choose to locate elsewhere, these small towns and rural places have struggled to identify their comparative advantages and attract new economic development. Some rural and tribal communities lack basic necessities such as safe and adequate drinking water, housing, and transportation infrastructure. In rural places close to metropolitan regions, farmland and natural lands have been lost to development, threatening resource-dependent economies and the rural character residents value. Dispersed and unplanned development on tribal lands can endanger the natural and cultural resources indigenous peoples depend on for subsistence hunting, fishing, gathering, and their livelihoods, particularly when it occurs without regard for indigenous cultures and traditions.

Neighborhoods without essential goods and services

As described above, disinvestment in many cities, older suburbs, and rural areas has left residents without the goods and services they need to thrive, including accessible and affordable transportation options, parks and other recreational facilities, good schools, health clinics, and grocery stores and other places to buy healthy food. The lack of transportation options is a particular challenge. Low-income and minority populations are less likely to own cars,[30] and their neighborhoods might not be served by efficient, reliable public transportation. They often lack sidewalks and bicycle paths to connect them to neighborhood destinations and transit stops. Those who do walk can face disproportionate safety risks due to poorly designed streets, neglected road maintenance, inadequate lighting, and minimal traffic enforcement.

Because low-income families have fewer transportation options and farther to travel to reach jobs and services, they typically spend a higher than average percentage of their incomes on transportation. While the average U.S. family spends about 18 percent of after-tax income on transportation, low-wage households living far from employment centers spend 37 percent of their incomes on transportation,[31] and very low-income households can spend 55 percent or

[30] PolicyLink and the Prevention Institute. *The Transportation Prescription.* Undated. www.policylink.org/site/apps/nlnet/content2.aspx?c=lkIXLbMNJrE&b=5136581&ct=7290885.
[31] PolicyLink and the Prevention Institute. *The Transportation Prescription.* Undated. www.policylink.org/site/apps/nlnet/content2.aspx?c=lkIXLbMNJrE&b=5136581&ct=7290885.

more.[32] In contrast, families living in neighborhoods well-served by public transportation spend an average of nine percent.[33]

Displacement

When neighborhood revitalization occurs, it can bring adverse unintended consequences for lower-income residents if it is not implemented with advance planning and strong community engagement. New investments in infrastructure, public transportation, and businesses can make surrounding real estate more desirable, raising property values and spurring the conversion of affordable housing to higher-end units. These trends can result in the displacement of existing residents. Leaving a neighborhood means not just leaving a home, but often social networks and community culture as well. Many long-time residents are eager to see their neighborhoods improve, and have successfully implemented beautification projects and begun to address contaminated properties. These residents often want to continue to participate in revitalization.

Community Engagement, Empowerment, and Capacity

Many factors can prevent low-income, minority, and tribal populations from participating in public decision-making. A lack of transparency or willingness of government agencies to engage the community early in planning can make it more difficult for them to influence development decisions. Even with open dialogue and transparency, other limitations might exist. These include educational and language differences, a lack of access to electronic communication resources, a lack of time for meetings and review of documents, and a lack of trust between decision-makers and community stakeholders. Community-based and neighborhood organizations often lack the ability to track and influence all the issues affecting their constituents. They might not have access to scientific, technical, or legal resources, or capacity to monitor funding sources or apply for grants or other assistance. Some government agencies are overcoming these barriers by translating publications and websites, holding meetings in various locations and at different times of day and night, and forming stronger partnerships with community-based organizations. However, many policymakers still need guidance on how to work most effectively with low-income, minority, and tribal populations and the social service entities, faith-based organizations, and environmental justice groups that serve them.

Text box: Climate Change Challenges in Low-Income and Overburdened Communities

The changing climate will present many challenges to communities, including hotter days and nights, more frequent heat waves, more and stronger storms, rising sea levels, and higher

[32] Center for Transit-Oriented Development. *Mixed-Income Housing Near Transit.* 2009. www.reconnectingamerica.org/public/display_asset/091030ra201mixedhousefinal.
[33] PolicyLink and the Prevention Institute. *The Transportation Prescription.* Undated. www.policylink.org/site/apps/nlnet/content2.aspx?c=lkIXLbMNJrE&b=5136581&ct=7290885

storm surges that cause more flooding. Effects will vary in different regions of the United States. Many of these effects are already being seen.[34]

Low-income and overburdened communities are particularly vulnerable to the projected impacts of climate change. These include health effects such as increased rates of asthma and other respiratory problems due to greater concentrations of local and regional air pollutants,[35] heat stress and heat exhaustion, and weather-related injury and death. Low-income households are less likely to have air conditioning in their homes and often live in neighborhoods without safe and convenient places to cool down, putting them at higher risk of heat stress, heat exhaustion, and even death.[36] More extreme temperatures and unpredictable energy prices can also raise energy costs for low-income families, who already spend a greater average share of their household incomes on energy than higher-income households.[37] The homes of lower-income residents are more vulnerable to violent weather, such as hurricanes and severe storms, because they might not be covered by insurance or constructed to resist dangerous weather. If their homes are destroyed, they might not be able to afford to rebuild or move to a safer location. Flood damage to affordable housing stock might leave lower-income people with fewer housing choices. For example, Cedar Falls, Iowa lost a significant number of affordable homes during the severe flooding of the Mississippi River in 2008.[38] Many of these homes were located in the river's floodplain.

[34] U.S. Global Change Research Program. *Global Climate Change Impacts in the United States.* 2009. www.globalchange.gov/what-we-do/assessment/previous-assessments/global-climate-change-impacts-in-the-us-2009.

[35] Interagency Working Group on Climate Change and Health. *A Human Health Perspective on Climate Change*. Environmental Health Perspectives and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences. 2010. www.niehs.nih.gov/health/assets/docs_a_e/climatereport2010.pdf.

[36] For a discussion of the characteristics of neighborhoods that suffered particularly high levels of heat-related deaths in the 1995 Chicago heat wave, see Browning, Christopher, et al. "Neighborhood Social Processes, Physical Conditions, and Disaster-Related Mortality: The Case of the 1995 Chicago Heat Wave." American Sociological Review, 2006, Vol. 71 (August:661–678). health.bsd.uchicago.edu/FileStore/BrowningWallaceFeinbergCagney_ASR_Aug%2006.pdf.

[37] Applied Public Policy Research Institute for Study and Evaluation. *LIHEAP Energy Burden Evaluation Study: Final Report*. 2005.

[38] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Smart Growth Technical Assistance in Iowa. www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/iowa_techasst.htm#cedarfalls.

Chapter 3: Strategies Linking Smart Growth, Environmental Justice, and Equitable Development

There are a wide variety of strategies and approaches that link smart growth and environmental justice to respond to the challenges faced by overburdened communities, promote development that is equitable and environmentally sustainable, and lay the foundation for economic resilience. This chapter describes approaches that communities across the country have used successfully. Since land use planning is a local responsibility, this report focuses on strategies that can be implemented by local governments, community-based organizations, or partnerships between them. In some cases, state, federal, or philanthropic support can be helpful.

The strategies are grouped under seven common elements, or shared goals and principles, that connect environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development. This document provides a brief introduction to each strategy, with a description of what it is, how it supports equitable and environmentally sustainable development, potential barriers to implementation by low-income or overburdened communities, and an example of how it has been used. Each section includes an in-depth case study highlighting a community's experiences with these strategies. The approaches described can be adapted to fit the particular needs of the community and guided by robust and early public engagement.

Further resources related to these strategies are listed in the Resource Guide at the end of this document.

[*Text box listing seven common elements*]

Special section: Minimizing Displacement: An Early Priority in Revitalization

Too often, revitalization efforts in lower-income or overburdened neighborhoods end up displacing long-time residents. To address this unintended impact, municipalities and community organizations are using strategies that draw needed resources and amenities into their neighborhoods while providing existing residents and the commercial, service, and cultural establishments they value with the opportunity to stay. A comprehensive approach encompasses affordable housing, commercial stabilization, economic and workforce development, supportive land use policies, and community engagement.

Local governments and community-based organizations should initiate efforts to mitigate displacement as revitalization planning begins rather than waiting until projects are underway. A community assessment is one way to start. Planners can use demographic data to understand who lives and works in a neighborhood and how this may change over time. Key indicators, such as rent as a percentage of household income and combined housing and transportation costs, can help identify residents that are particularly vulnerable to displacement. The government of the District of Columbia mapped and scored median household incomes, median home values, projected rise in home values, the proportion of renters to homeowners, and the proximity to subway stations for all neighborhoods in the city. Planners aggregated the scores to produce an indicator of pressure on housing affordability for each neighborhood.

Land use policies

Municipalities and their community partners can mitigate displacement by making sure that supportive land use and development regulations are in place. First, they can work together to map out important commercial, industrial, service, and cultural sites; determine how these land uses fit into the zoning plan; and identify needed updates. For instance, the municipality could create a special use district to encourage small, neighborhood-serving businesses, or permit developers to build at greater densities in commercial districts if they provide retail space set-asides or other benefits for locally owned businesses. As discussed in Section D, ordinances that allow inclusionary zoning, mixed-use and transit-oriented development, multi-family housing, and smaller lot sizes can also help residents afford housing and transportation costs and reduce the likelihood that they will need to relocate.

Commercial stabilization

Retaining and strengthening local businesses can help prevent displacement. Small, locally owned enterprises serve neighborhood residents, generate jobs, support the neighborhood economy, and keep money in the community. These institutions are also critical to the distinctive character of a place and to residents' sense of belonging and ownership. When these businesses are healthy, they are more likely to stay through neighborhood changes.

Many governments and organizations have created programs to support neighborhood businesses. Municipal assistance often begins with capital investments in streets, sidewalks,

parks, and lighting in commercial districts. Local governments can offer merchants grants or low-interest loans to renovate their storefronts.

Some local governments and organizations sponsor training for small businesses on topics such as merchandising, marketing, and how to take advantage of financial opportunities like the Enterprise Zone Tax Credit program, which provides tax incentives to businesses in economically distressed areas. Other business assistance programs include education about upcoming development and zoning changes and their implications for the business climate. Some municipalities hire lawyers to help local businesses obtain longer-term leases.

Many locally owned businesses receive aid from the National Trust for Historic Preservation's Main Street program, which supports commercial district revitalization. The Fruitvale Main Street Program, in a predominantly Latino neighborhood of East Oakland, California, was one of the first Main Street programs. Led by the Unity Council, a local community development corporation, the program has coordinated infrastructure investments, provided grants to help more than 100 businesses renovate their storefronts, promoted the annual Día de los Muertos celebration, and offered assistance to businesses, many of which are owned by immigrants, to improve their products and customer service.[39]

Economic development for existing residents

When revitalization brings jobs and other direct economic benefits to existing residents, they will be less vulnerable to displacement. Municipalities and community organizations can work with developers to recruit local residents for construction and renovation jobs. Local governments can partner with non-profits or community colleges to provide job training programs on relevant skills such as brownfields assessment and cleanup or rehabilitation of historic properties. In exchange for public funding, municipalities can also require developers to hire contractors that are small or minority-owned businesses or commit to local and minority hiring, have responsible labor records, provide health care to employees, and support apprenticeship programs.

Some community-based organizations have negotiated community benefits agreements—private contracts between a developer and a community group that establish the benefits the community will receive from development. These agreements can result in local hiring and training programs, living wages, affordable housing, or funds for community programs. In exchange, the developer usually receives the support of the community coalition, making project approval easier.

It is important to ensure that the economic benefits for existing residents continue after redevelopment efforts are complete. Municipalities can work with developers to recruit small businesses and other commercial tenants that will hire locally. Community organizations can

[39] PolicyLink. Equitable Development Toolkit. www.policylink.org/site/c.lkIXLbMNJrE/b.5136575/k.39A1/Equitable_Development_Toolkit.htm.

host job placement centers in the neighborhood and work with social service providers to identify candidates for open positions. The involvement of community development corporations can be helpful, as neighborhood revitalization and economic development are fundamental parts of their missions.

Section A: Facilitate Meaningful Community Engagement in Land Use Decisions: A Prerequisite for All Initiatives

Meaningful community participation and leadership in land use decision-making can ensure that revitalization is a community-based process that builds on local values and assets and brings the amenities that residents need. Every strategy in this report must be supported by early and consistent stakeholder engagement to be effective. Giving all residents a voice results in planning and development decisions that are informed by a variety of perspectives, have authentic support from a broad range of constituents, and are more enduring and better for the community as a whole. Obtaining input from groups not historically involved in planning can help reduce the disproportionate environmental harms and health impacts they often face and make sure that future development brings fair access to new opportunities. For developers, it can lead to more predictable development processes and reduce costly delays caused by community opposition.

Local government staff should maintain an open relationship with the public throughout the planning process. An important initial step is to identify all affected stakeholders, from residents to local business owners to representatives of community institutions. These constituents should be invited to provide input early so their needs and visions for the community can be incorporated before the plan or project has already been shaped. They should be active participants in collecting information, identifying challenges and opportunities, and setting goals.

Most local and regional land use and transportation agencies have established public involvement procedures that include public meetings at key stages when developing plans or reviewing projects. They often issue written communications such as news releases and draft documents and solicit feedback through online surveys or social media tools. However, it is important for planners to go beyond the minimum requirements and to address factors that can keep people from engaging. Many residents have never participated in public decision-making and might not be familiar with the process or feel comfortable sharing their views with officials. They might not have reliable transportation to and from meetings, be able to afford child care during meetings, be able to take time off from work to attend, or speak fluent English. To achieve an equitable public process, officials should seek out and facilitate the involvement of stakeholders that are not traditionally engaged in planning using the approaches in this section.

Four engagement strategies that are particularly applicable to planning are described here: multilingual outreach, community assessments, community-based participatory research, and community planning and visioning workshops. These can be led by local government agencies, community groups, or partnerships between them. For instance, a local planning agency could hold public workshops to collect ideas for a neighborhood plan; to prepare for these workshops, a neighborhood-based non-profit organization could conduct visioning sessions for residents who are new to the planning process.

Conduct Multilingual Outreach

Outreach to non-English speakers is increasingly important for effective and inclusive public processes. The number of U.S. residents whose primary language is not English has grown over recent decades, spurring cities and counties to find new ways of engaging the public. According to the 2000 U.S. Census, nearly 11 million Americans have limited English proficiency.[40]

Comprehensive public engagement programs result in solutions that are better for residents and municipalities. An inclusive approach can help government agencies tailor their programs to users, making them more effective and popular among residents. For example, some transportation authorities are finding that improving outreach to non-English speaking groups increases ridership and public support for their services.[41]

Inclusive outreach is required for transportation, housing, and other infrastructure projects that use federal funding. Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act prohibits discrimination based on national origin by failing to make activities supported by the federal government accessible to people with limited English proficiency.[42] Executive Order 13166 requires federally assisted programs to provide written documents in the languages of groups likely to be affected by the particular program. The order also addresses the need for interpretation and translation, such as by translating websites and brochures and providing multilingual phone lines and customer service staff.[43]

Many transportation and land use planning entities across the country regularly provide information and materials for non-English speakers. Houston's transit agency provides printed information in five languages.[44] In Orange County, California, several staff in the transit agency's customer relations department speak Spanish or Vietnamese, and press releases and other written materials are submitted to Spanish and Vietnamese print and broadcast media.[45] The Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority uses a Spanish-language blog called *El Pasajero* (*The Passenger*) to serve the 61 percent of its riders and 37 percent of the agency's workforce that speak Spanish.[46]

Staff and volunteers from non-profit or neighborhood organizations can be helpful partners in facilitating communication between the government and the community. With their

[40] U.S. Census Bureau. Census 2000, SF3 Sample Data. Table QT-P17, Ability to Speak English: 2000.
[41] U.S. Government Accountability Office. *Transportation Services: Better Dissemination and Oversight of DOT's Guidance Could Lead to Improved Access for Limited English-Proficient Populations.* 2005. www.gao.gov/new.items/d0652.pdf.
[42] Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, 42 U.S.C. 2000d, et seq.
[43] Exec. Order No. 13166, 65 Fed. Reg. 159 (August 11, 2000).
[44] U.S. Department of Transportation. Public Involvement Techniques for Transportation Decision-Making: Ethnic, Minority, and Low-Income Groups. www.fhwa.dot.gov/reports/pittd/ethmin.htm.
[45] Orange County Transit Authority. *Orange County Transportation Limited-English Proficiency Plan.* 2011. www.octa.net/pdf/lepplan.pdf.
[46] Behrens, Zach. "Metro Launches Spanish Language Blog, El Pasajero." KCET. April 8, 2011. www.kcet.org/updaily/socal_focus/transportation/metro-spanish-blog-32151.html.

understanding of the community's culture, needs, and objectives, these liaisons can help educate and engage residents, prepare for and conduct public meetings, provide translation assistance, and serve as facilitators.

Case Study: Inclusive Neighborhood Planning – Seattle, Washington

The city of Seattle used innovative neighborhood planning approaches to give the culturally diverse Othello community a voice in the development around a new light-rail station. Opened in July 2009, the Othello station is on a light-rail line running through Rainier Valley, linking downtown Seattle to Sea-Tac International Airport. Because of an inclusive planning process that went beyond minimum requirements to engage Othello's historically underrepresented communities, the station is surrounded by a vibrant and diverse neighborhood with shopping, a library, a community college, and affordable homes.

Located in southeast Seattle, the Othello neighborhood is multicultural, with nearly 50 percent of its residents foreign-born. The larger southeast area has a variety of incomes, with affluent neighborhoods and two large public housing projects.

In the 1990s, the city asked community members in 38 neighborhoods to create neighborhood plans to guide future growth. Since the adoption of the original neighborhood plans, Seattle has grown in population, jobs, and diversity. With new residents moving in, real estate prices have increased in some working-class neighborhoods. There has also been significant development interest around light-rail stations. As a result, the city decided to update three neighborhood plans in southeast Seattle, including Othello's. For this effort, the city would draw on its Race and Social Justice Initiative, created in 2002 to end race-based disparities in city programs and services.

To update the plans, the city engaged thousands of people using an online survey and traditional neighborhood meetings. It also employed special outreach liaisons to work with members of historically underrepresented communities, including Cambodian, Somali, Amharic, Vietnamese, Latino, Native American, African-American, and youth communities, and persons with disabilities. Before the city's public meetings, the liaisons translated materials and held smaller meetings with their constituents. At first, few community members attended the city's public meetings. However, attendance grew over time, with participation increasing from approximately 10 to between 300 and 400 residents per meeting. Altogether, the city provided information to 3,000 people and 1,600 became involved in the planning initiatives.

When the city talked with the Othello community about the planned light-rail station, the residents said they wanted a town center that would support the existing multicultural business district, make walking safer and more pleasant through sidewalks and landscaping, and provide affordable housing for working families.

Multiple partners collaborated to help realize the community's vision, including Sound Transit, the Seattle Housing Authority, the city's Department of Planning and Development, local developer Othello Partners, and USAA Bank.

The new station provides easy access to the Seattle Housing Authority's New Holly neighborhood, which includes 1,450 homes for people with a range of incomes. A branch of the

Seattle Public Library, South Seattle Community College, and a new walking and biking path are within walking distance of the development. Three additional housing complexes are planned near the Othello station, primarily for low-income buyers. A development of 435 homes has been completed, and a 420,000-square-foot mixed-use project with 352 residences is planned.

"To truly achieve equitable development and smart growth, there must be strategies and investments that create anchors to hold in place those communities most at risk of displacement due to real estate pressures," said Nora Liu, Neighborhood Planning Manager for the City of Seattle. "In this way, improvements to the built environment can benefit those who are there now as well as new residents seeking a more sustainable way to live."

Conduct Community Assessments

Conventional planning processes might not always capture detailed information about specific community challenges or priorities. A community assessment can fill those gaps. In a community assessment, the community gathers, analyzes, and reports information to produce a more complete picture of current conditions, needs, and available resources. An assessment typically focuses on a priority issue, such as housing or transportation options in a neighborhood. Examples include walkability audits, which evaluate the safety and convenience of the walking environment, and community food assessments, which analyze the availability of food options, particularly healthy, fresh food.

Community assessments are usually conducted through partnerships among community organizations and residents, and often receive support from government agencies, academic institutions, and foundations. Experts and residents work together to establish indicators that show current conditions and measure future progress. They also identify how to collect information most effectively. Sources can include residents' input gathered through interviews, surveys, and focus groups or data from research institutions. After the assessment, participants determine how to share findings so they will be accessible and understandable to the broader public.

In Bakersfield, California, the Greenfield Walking Group, comprised primarily of Spanish-speaking female farm workers, teamed up with the Central California Regional Obesity Prevention Program to spearhead a walkability assessment of their local park. The group identified areas of the park that were unsafe, discouraged physical activity, or were unwelcoming to children, and their findings led to several improvements, including the construction of a walking path and playground.[47]

The Walkable and Livable Communities Institute, with the support of EPA, conducted a walkability workshop with the residents of St. Louis' predominantly African American 26th ward. Participants joined a facilitated walk around the neighborhood where they identified barriers to walkability such as crime, excessive vehicle speeds, street closures, and a lack of good walking and bicycling routes to the nearby light rail station. Residents and experts then explored solutions such as organizing a community-based Active Living Working Group to prioritize efforts and pursue funding, fixing broken pedestrian crossing signals, and reconnecting barricaded streets.[48]

Community assessments often require funding and expertise. While some communities obtain these resources through grants or partnerships with academic institutions, others engage skilled volunteers such as graduate students with mapping or planning knowledge.

[47] The California Endowment. *The Greenfield Walking Group- Transforming A Park, Transforming a Community.* Undated. www.csufresno.edu/ccchhs/institutes_programs/CCROPP/activities/success_stories/greenfield.pdf.
[48] Walkable and Livable Communities Institute. *Suggested Next Steps as Outcome of Technical Assistance, 26th Ward, St Louis, MO.* 2011.

Alternatively, using "off the shelf" assessment tools, such as prepared zoning code audits, and keeping activities simple allows community members to complete the bulk of the project.

Community assessments can uncover issues that are considered in conventional planning processes and shed light on appropriate solutions. They provide credible data that community organizations and government staff can use to document needs, secure grants, and inform future neighborhood investments. They can also lead to new relationships among citizens, organizations, and government partners.

Conduct Community-Based Participatory Research

While community assessments are a method for investigating and highlighting resident concerns on the ground, community-based participatory research ensures that community representatives are involved in designing, conducting, and reporting research.

Recognizing that research findings are influenced by the perspectives of the investigators, community-based participatory research places members of the affected community on the research team. Community members and researchers from universities, government agencies, and non-profits work together to identify the problems that matter to residents and find culturally appropriate solutions. This approach can produce better results by incorporating the community's knowledge and can also build technical capacity among residents.

In one example of community-based participatory research, residents of low-income, predominantly African-American and Latino communities in the Detroit area participated in research by the Michigan Center for the Environment and Children's Health. They helped define research topics, design survey questions, hire staff, enroll participants in studies, and interpret and share findings.[49]

True community-based participatory research involves shared ownership of any data produced, allowing residents to use it for advocacy or fundraising. Additionally, community participants serve as co-authors on publications and presentations, ensuring community involvement when results are being interpreted and shared with broader constituencies.

To be most effective, this approach requires sufficient funding to train community members in research techniques and compensate community partners for their efforts, allowing them to participate as equals with paid researchers.

[49]Israel, Barbara et al. "Community-Based Participatory Research: Lessons Learned from the Centers for Children's Environmental Health and Disease Prevention Research." *Environmental Health Perspectives*. October 2005, www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC1281296/pdf/ehp0113-001463.pdf.

Hold Community Planning and Visioning Workshops

Community planning and visioning workshops bring stakeholders together to find a common vision for issues affecting the built and natural environments. These workshops can guide the futures of specific development projects, neighborhoods and business districts, or entire cities and regions.

Planning and visioning workshops can be sponsored by public agencies, non-governmental organizations, and private developers. They are usually managed by facilitators who lead participants through structured discussions and design exercises. After the workshop, the results, along with recommendations on how to achieve the vision, are shared with the broader public and decision-makers. Planning and visioning workshops can run from one day to multiple meetings scheduled over several months. Multi-day collaborative planning events where stakeholders create a plan and implementation strategy are known as charrettes. The costs of a workshop or charrette vary depend on their complexity, technical needs, and duration.

Local decision-makers typically take part in planning workshops to learn about the needs and goals of their constituents. In Gary, Indiana, elected officials joined community leaders at a design workshop convened by the American Planning Association's Planning and the Black Community Division. Together, they developed a vision for revitalizing the Broadway corridor that runs through the heart of Gary's African-American community. The plan called for reusing vacant parcels, strengthening community elements that showcase the area's cultural heritage, and improving transportation options by creating nature trails and transit-oriented development.[50]

Planning and visioning workshops should be tailored to the specific needs of the community. For instance, some community members may not immediately feel comfortable expressing their ideas in front of government representatives. In these cases, a non-profit organization could hold pre-workshops for residents, where they can share their experiences and concerns comfortably. Conducting pre-workshops also provides an opportunity for facilitators to educate participants about strategies that have been applied in other communities, expanding their knowledge of potential solutions and preparing them to collaborate with municipal staff.

[50] American Planning Association, Planning and the Black Community Division. *Vision for Broadway.* 2009. www.planning.org/divisions/blackcommunity/pdf/garyindinana.pdf.

Section B: Promote Public Health and a Clean and Safe Environment

A clean and safe environment and healthy residents are the ultimate goals of environmental justice, smart growth, and equitable development. Neighborhoods should be free from pollution, and homes should be buffered from hazardous land uses like incinerators, heavy manufacturing plants, and goods movement facilities. Contaminated sites resulting from previous industrial activities should be cleaned up and put to safer use. Buildings, streets, and other infrastructure should be constructed in ways that reduce air and water pollution and are healthy for the people using them.

Approaches that integrate smart growth and environmental justice offer ways of arranging land uses, developing sites, and constructing buildings that can help protect overburdened populations from environmental and health hazards and bring benefits like clean air and water. This section covers five strategies for planning and developing healthy, sustainable neighborhoods. The first two, reducing exposure to hazardous land uses and to goods movement activities, focus on zoning and planning tools that can help protect the neighbors of existing facilities and site new ones in appropriate locations. Next, cleaning up and reusing brownfields and Superfund sites can remove health hazards while boosting local economies and enhancing quality of life. The final two strategies, creating green buildings and green streets, can reduce pollution and contribute to healthier indoor and outdoor environments.

Reduce Exposure to Hazardous Land Uses

Proactive and coordinated planning can help reduce residents' exposure to hazardous land uses and their health effects. Safe land use planning begins with recognizing incompatible land uses, such as hazardous and "sensitive" uses. Hazardous land uses include sources of localized air pollution, such as industrial facilities, power plants, truck depots, and freeways. Sensitive land uses include places where children, the elderly, people with health problems exacerbated by poor air quality, and other vulnerable individuals are likely to be found, such as schools, playgrounds, daycare centers, nursing homes, and residences.

Planners can work with state and local environmental, air, and transportation agencies to understand the potential health and environmental impacts of the facilities allowed under each land use classification. These agencies can provide air quality and emissions data, health risk estimates, and evaluation tools for use in land use decision-making. In most cases, state agencies issue permits for air emissions, water discharges, or waste disposal. By coordinating with state officials, local planners can receive early notice of permit applications in their areas and become involved in permitting, encouraging state agencies to assess adverse impacts and solicit community input before approving permits. The early identification of potential impacts from proposed activities can help prevent or reduce them before projects are approved.

Local agencies can use planning, zoning, and permitting tools to reduce exposure to existing and proposed hazardous land uses. The comprehensive plan can lay out general goals, objectives, and policies to address facility siting. For instance, the land use section of the plan

could identify areas appropriate for future industrial uses and introduce design and distance parameters that reduce exposure to these uses when they already exist close to residential neighborhoods.[51]

Zoning ordinances can set minimum separation distances for specific facility types or create buffer zones, zoning districts that serve as transitional areas between incompatible uses. Buffer zones can include open spaces or light commercial uses. Vegetation or other types of physical screening can also be used to buffer some incompatible uses.

Another method is to require a conditional use permit for land uses with potentially significant environmental or health impacts. Such a permit specifies conditions under which the land use will be allowed and imposes special requirements to ensure that it will not be detrimental to its surroundings. In Huntington Park, California, the zoning ordinance for commercial, office, and mixed-use zones conditions permits on a facility's proximity to residences and the level of adverse impact it presents. The city can also require mitigation and reduction of diesel emissions generated by expanded or new facilities or operations.[52]

Local governments can use performance zoning to regulate the impacts of land use by providing standards to limit certain nuisance-like activities. These standards treat all similar projects equally, reserving the more resource-intensive conditional use permit for projects that require more detailed analysis. Examples of performance standards include limiting hours of operation to reduce emissions exposure, requiring fleet operators to use cleaner vehicles when expanding their fleets, and providing alternate truck routes that avoid residential neighborhoods.[53]

Municipalities can also establish overlay zones, which impose further requirements on existing zoning districts, such as industrial zones located close to residential neighborhoods. The city of Austin, Texas created the East Austin Overlay District, where any new facility with operations more intense than a commercial use must obtain a conditional use permit and notify residents. If industrial facilities within the district closed, another ordinance authorized rezoning those sites to less intensive use categories.[54]

Communities can seek the rezoning of a more intensive use designation to a less intensive one. This approach is more likely to be successful if neighbors have documented the incompatibility

[51] California Air Resources Board. *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective*. 2005. www.arb.ca.gov/ch/landuse.htm.
[52] National Academy of Public Administration. *Addressing Community Concerns: How Environmental Justice Relates to Land Use Planning and Zoning.* 2003. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej/resources/reports/annual-project-reports/napa-land-use-zoning-63003.pdf.
[53] California Air Resources Board. *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective*. 2005. www.arb.ca.gov/ch/landuse.htm.
[54] National Academy of Public Administration. *Addressing Community Concerns: How Environmental Justice Relates to Land Use Planning and Zoning.* 2003. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej/resources/reports/annual-project-reports/napa-land-use-zoning-63003.pdf.

of the use and its impacts on health, safety, and community character; rezoning is sought before specific land use proposals arise; rezoning is sought for all neighboring parcels with similar use designations and impacts to avoid singling out a particular landowner; and the proposed new zoning classification leaves the owner some economically viable use of the land.[55]

Zoning and land use approaches can also be helpful where hazardous facilities already exist. Many municipalities "grandfather" land uses that were allowed before current zoning laws. However, municipalities may prohibit grandfathering when these uses conflict with the goals of existing comprehensive plans or pose environmental, health, or economic risks. They can adopt amortization laws to eliminate nonconforming uses.[56] National City, California's land use code allows its city council to order a nonconforming use to be terminated on the recommendation of the planning commission. National City is developing a decision support tool that will rank properties with nonconforming uses according to criteria such as the possible threats to public health and safety, the cost of moving and reestablishing the use elsewhere, and the adaptability of the property to a currently permitted use.[57]

Where zoning laws date back several decades, which is often the case, municipalities might need comprehensive rezoning to codify new priorities. This public process provides many opportunities for community input. However, it is a lengthy undertaking that requires an updated comprehensive plan.

If a municipality opts to eliminate or relocate an industrial facility that provided jobs to nearby residents, they might want to take steps to ensure that the development that replaces them is also a source of jobs for residents. Strategies to help achieve this are described in the text box on minimizing displacement at the beginning of this chapter.

Reduce Exposure to Goods Movement Activities

"Goods movement" is the distribution of freight by all modes of transportation, including marine, air, rail, and truck. Goods movement facilities can include seaports, airports, rail yards, rail lines, and truck loading stations and travel routes, as well as places where freight is processed and stored such as warehouses and distribution centers. Effective land use planning, along with technology and regulations, can reduce the impacts of goods movement activities so communities can more safely take advantage of the economic opportunities it can bring.

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[55] National Academy of Public Administration. *Addressing Community Concerns: How Environmental Justice Relates to Land Use Planning and Zoning.* 2003. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej/resources/reports/annual-project-reports/napa-land-use-zoning-63003.pdf.

[56] Salkin, Patricia. *Environmental Justice and Land Use Planning and Zoning.* 2004. www.governmentlaw.org/files/EJ_land_use.pdf.

[57] Partnership for Sustainable Communities. *National City, California: Recommendations for Ranking Properties with Nonconforming Uses in the Westside Specific Plan Area.* 2011. www.epa.gov/brownfields/sustain_plts/reports/property_ranking_process.pdf.

Some states and localities require buffer zones between freight facilities and residential neighborhoods. The California Air Resources Board has prohibited the construction of new schools and homes within a mile of a rail yard or 500 feet of a highway.[58] Others use a combination of planning, regulatory, and technological solutions. In Oakland, California, the Ditching Dirty Diesel Collaborative is developing regional strategies to reduce exposure to diesel emissions from trucks. Funded by foundations and various federal and state agencies, the group found that average diesel emissions in West Oakland, a predominantly African-American community, were 90 times greater than in the rest of California. They obtained commitments from the Bay Area Air Quality Management District to reduce diesel pollution through several methods, including eliminating unlicensed truck traffic, rerouting traffic away from residential neighborhoods, and providing financial incentives to fleet owners to retire the dirtiest trucks. They also secured an agreement to move trucking businesses away from residential areas to a decommissioned army base owned by the city and the Port of Oakland. In addition, the port installed electrical hook-ups so trucks waiting to enter the port would not need to idle.[59]

Clean and Reuse Contaminated Properties

Brownfields and Superfund sites are contaminated properties that require special cleanup and redevelopment strategies. With planning and remediation, it is possible to reuse these sites for commercial and industrial uses, housing, transit stations, parks, and other community facilities that can boost local economies. Since these sites are often located within populated areas, their reuse can be a critical component of walkable, mixed-use redevelopment in existing communities.

EPA defines brownfields as properties whose expansion, redevelopment, or reuse could be complicated by the presence or potential presence of a hazardous substance, pollutant, or contaminant.[60] Brownfields are often abandoned, idled, or underused industrial and commercial sites. They can be structures or empty lots. Federal, state, and local governments provide support for brownfield cleanup and redevelopment, including tax incentives, grants, low-interest loans, technical assistance, protection from liability, and streamlined government oversight of cleanups.

In contrast to brownfields, Superfund sites have been designated by EPA as the country's most contaminated sites. Cleanup can be complex, often requiring several years to study the issues, develop solutions, and complete remediation. Through EPA's Superfund program, administered with state and tribal governments, the agency can clean up hazardous waste sites and compel responsible parties to perform cleanups or reimburse the government for cleanup activities. Additionally, EPA's Superfund Redevelopment Initiative provides technical, financial, and other forms of assistance to communities working to redevelop contaminated land. EPA is working

[58] California SB 352. Ch. 668 (2003).
[59] Palaniappan, Meena. "Ditching Diesel." *Race, Poverty and the Environment.* Urban Habitat. Undated. www.urbanhabitat.org/node/163.
[60] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. About Brownfields. www.epa.gov/brownfields/about.htm.

with stakeholders in Jacksonville, Florida to conduct Superfund site reuse assessments that explore the healthcare needs of nearby communities and opportunities for redevelopment to meet them. These reuse assessments can provide information needed to apply for federal funding and build partnerships with public health decision-makers who can support funding applications.

Early community involvement in site cleanup decisions is critical to ensure that reuse strategies align with community needs. Ideally, the municipality, community stakeholders, and state and federal partners would identify the preferred future use of the site before cleanup occurs. If housing is planned for a brownfield site, for instance, different cleanup remedies might be required than if a new industrial facility is to be built. A plan for the area surrounding the site can further inform cleanup strategies. EPA's Area-Wide Planning Program is supporting the city of Ogdensburg, New York as it works to turn a formerly industrial corridor along its riverfront into a walkable, mixed-use development. The city is creating an action plan for the 15 brownfields in the area, with an inventory of site conditions, reuse opportunities, and existing infrastructure.[61]

If site cleanup is already underway, municipalities, states, and federal agencies can work together to remove barriers to reuse. Activities such as assessing the reuse potential of properties, providing education about reuse practices and opportunities, and encouraging private entities to invest in reuse can be effective.

[61] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Brownfields Area-Wide Planning Pilot Project Fact Sheet: Ogdensburg, NY.* 2010. www.epa.gov/brownfields/grant_announce/awp/awp_ogdensburg_ny.pdf.

Case Study: Site Cleanup as a Catalyst for Revitalization – Spartanburg, South Carolina

The Arkwright and Forest Park neighborhoods in Spartanburg, South Carolina revitalized their community through partnerships to clean up pollution from contaminated sites. The effort was spearheaded by ReGenesis, an environmental justice organization whose initial focus on brownfield cleanups broadened over time to include revitalization of the entire community. The ReGenesis initiative eventually led to the construction of new housing, businesses, a shopping center, and health clinics.

Located on the edge of Spartanburg's downtown, the Arkwright and Forest Park neighborhoods are predominantly African-American. Because of the lack of zoning before 1976, homes are located near former industrial and landfill sites and an active chemical plant. Over the past decades, residents have reported high rates of illness and death that they attribute to environmental pollution. The neighborhoods have also struggled with high unemployment, poor health services, disinvestment, and run-down housing.

After his father passed away from an undiagnosed illness, resident Harold Mitchell began examining the health impacts faced by residents living near a former dump site and an abandoned fertilizer plant. He founded ReGenesis in 1997 to bring together affected residents. He also asked EPA for assistance. After extensive sampling, EPA found contaminants such as metals, nitrate, and fluoride in the soil, ground water, surface water, and sediment at one of the sites, which was later designated a Superfund site. With the help of a facilitator to break through the community's distrust of government agencies, residents worked with EPA and state staff to explore how the site could be cleaned up and reused. ReGenesis created a comprehensive redevelopment plan that included the cleanup of contaminated sites, improved public safety, enhanced education and life skills training, public health services, transportation access, open space, and affordable housing.

ReGenesis understood that partnerships were necessary to move their plan into action. They met in one-on-one meetings and forums with local, state, and federal government representatives as well as businesses, politicians, foundations, and technical experts. Over time, ReGenesis secured a diverse stream of financial support for the community. "You can't put money in a community and say 'Make it happen.' You build community capacity with time and patience," said Nancy Whittle, the South Carolina Department of Health and Environmental Control community liaison who took part in ReGenesis' many revitalization forums.

With strong support from the mayor and county, state, and federal officials, the ReGenesis partnerships led to remarkable results. As part of a HOPE VI housing project, businesses owned by women and minorities and unemployed residents who had completed a job training program built affordable homes. Through a $2.2 million appropriation, Congress funded a study of alternate access roads to link neighborhoods that a railroad divided. ReGenesis also worked with the environmental group Upstate Forever to create green space and trails along the nearby creek, complementing a senior housing development constructed on a cleaned-up brownfield site. "Public-private partnerships normally include minimal local community

engagement, yet we demonstrated that community residents were essential components of our efforts in Spartanburg. The community's deep engagement and commitment were what made the revitalization of the Arkwright and Forest Park areas possible," said Harold Mitchell, now a member of the South Carolina House of Representatives.

"Smart growth is possible with an informed and empowered community," said Cynthia Peurifoy, EPA's Region 4 environmental justice program manager. "The ReGenesis story teaches us that community-driven redevelopment efforts can bring great results."

Promote Green Building

Green buildings use sustainable siting, design, and materials to create healthy indoor and outdoor environments. When designed and operated appropriately, green buildings can reduce exposure to toxics and pollutants that have been linked to cancer, asthma, and other health problems. They often include natural landscaping features to capture and filter polluted runoff that would otherwise flow into water bodies. They also use innovative practices and technologies to reduce energy and water consumption and costs.[62,63] These practices bring significant benefits for low-income families, who spend 19 to 26 percent of their household incomes on energy. The lowest-income families can spend even more.[64,65]

There are a wide range of green building certification programs nationwide. Two of the most popular are the U.S. Green Building Council's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) and EPA's ENERGY STAR Homes programs. LEED provides green building guidelines and certification. LEED rates buildings based on their performance in five areas: sustainable site development, water savings, energy efficiency, materials selection, and indoor environmental quality. ENERGY STAR Homes qualifies new homes that meet its energy efficiency guidelines. Builders participating in the program work with certified experts to incorporate features—including insulation, high-performance windows, and efficient heating and cooling equipment—that can make homes 20 to 30 percent more efficient than standard homes. Homeowners and developers can also incorporate green building techniques without seeking certification through one of these programs.

Community organizations and municipalities around the country are working with non-profits, foundations, and other private entities to incorporate green design in their development projects. In Chicago, Bethel New Life—profiled in Section E—built a LEED-certified community center on a cleaned-up brownfield. Public housing developers are also using green designs to create healthier environments for residents and reduce their own operating costs. High Point, a HOPE VI public housing redevelopment in Seattle, uses green building strategies to improve water and energy efficiency, enhance indoor air quality, and manage runoff.[66,67]

Community organizations are using green building practices to tackle health hazards in older homes. With support from HUD and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the National Coalition to End Childhood Lead Poisoning is coordinating the Green and Healthy

[62] Turner, Cathy and Frankel, Mark. *Energy Performance of LEED for New Construction Buildings: Final Report.* New Buildings Institute. 2008. www.usgbc.org/ShowFile.aspx?DocumentID=3930.
[63] Kats, Greg. *The Costs and Financial Benefits of Green Buildings: A Report to California's Sustainable Building Task Force.* 2003. www.usgbc.org/Docs/News/News477.pdf.
[64] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Utility Bills Burden the Poor and Can Cause Homelessness. 2009. www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/library/energy/homelessness.cfm.
[65] Trisko, Eugene. *The Rising Burden of Energy Costs on American Families, 1997-2007.* 2006.
[66] Seattle Housing Authority. HOPE VI Program. www.seattlehousing.org/redevelopment/hope-vi.
[67] The High Point Redevelopment project was a winner of EPA's National Award for Smart Growth Achievement in 2007 (see www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/awards/sg_awards_publication_2007.htm).

Homes Initiative to holistically address environmental and health issues in homes. The initiative trains workers to deal with health concerns such as deteriorating lead-based paint, mold, poor ventilation, and pests as well as to boost their energy efficiency.[68]

Build Green Streets

Rainwater that washes over pavement carries pollutants such as motor oil and grease directly into streams, lakes, rivers, and bays. These pollutants can enter drinking water and come into contact with humans in other ways. A green street uses natural landscaping to collect, filter, and cleanse polluted runoff by mimicking natural processes where rainfall is evaporated, taken up by plants, or drained into the soil. Almost any type of street can be greened, including main arterial roads, residential streets, and alleys.

Green streets can incorporate a variety of design elements, including rain gardens, sidewalk planters, tree boxes, landscaped medians, and permeable paving. The plants and soils used in gardens, medians, and planters help to filter and break down pollutants. Trees catch and absorb rainfall and help water to evaporate. Green street designs sometimes reduce the amount of hard surface by narrowing the street. Porous materials such as permeable pavement can also replace portions of streets typically covered by concrete and asphalt.

Green streets improve air quality by intercepting small particles of air pollutants and reducing "heat islands" that occur when concrete and asphalt are heated during hot weather.[69] They can beautify neighborhoods and calm traffic, making walking and biking safer and more enjoyable. They can also reduce the risk of localized flooding and the need for more costly traditional "grey" infrastructure—such as expanded sewer systems and water treatment facilities—to handle runoff.

Green street projects run the gamut from large and complex to relatively simple, small, and low-cost. The city of Portland, Oregon approved a resolution in 2007 to promote green street features in public and private developments. The resolution directed city agencies to work together to install green streets and integrate them into the city's land use and transportation plans. Projects resulting from the resolution include street planters at Portland State University, an elementary school rain garden, and permeable pavement in various locations.[70] In San Francisco, Plant*SF, a non-profit group worked with city agencies to streamline permitting for green sidewalk projects such as planters, tree boxes, and rain gardens. The organization also created a guide to help individuals, businesses, and neighborhood groups obtain permits and design and install their own sidewalk landscaping.[71]

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[68] Green and Healthy Homes Initiative. www.greenandhealthyhomes.org.

[69] According to EPA, heat islands are built up areas that are hotter than nearby rural areas. For more information on heat islands, see www.epa.gov/heatisld.

[70] Portland Bureau of Environmental Services. Portland Green Street Program. www.portlandonline.com/BES/index.cfm?c=44407.

[71] Plant*SF. www.plantsf.org.

Case Study: Greening a Small Town Main Street – Edmonston, Maryland

Edmonston, Maryland's Green Street Project marries new and old technologies to reduce pollution, conserve energy, manage stormwater runoff, and redesign the town's main thoroughfare, Decatur Street. Spearheaded by Mayor Adam Ortiz, a citizens' advisory group, and the Chesapeake Bay Trust, this project redefines the street as more than just cars and asphalt. Completed in November 2010, Edmonston's green street protects the regional watershed, lays a foundation for reinvestment in the town center, and is already inspiring other communities to implement similar projects.

Located near Washington, D.C., Edmonston is a port town that extends on both sides of the Anacostia River. Since its incorporation in the 1920s, the town has suffered frequent flooding. During the past decade alone, Edmonston flooded four times, and a 2006 flood submerged 56 homes. "Contrary to conventional wisdom, we don't flood from the Anacostia River," explains Mayor Ortiz. "We flood because of parking lots, shopping centers, highways, and roofs." Stormwater runoff from these hard surfaces not only contributes to flooding, but also carries pollutants into the Anacostia River and, ultimately, the Chesapeake Bay.

For Mayor Ortiz, the flooding problem was as much a social justice issue as an environmental one, as the town's sizable lower-income and immigrant populations were most affected. Shortly after the 2006 flood, the town began searching for longer-term solutions.

With a $25,000 grant from the Chesapeake Bay Trust, the town tasked a local research organization, the Low Impact Development Center, to examine stormwater options along Decatur Street. The mayor and city council formed a volunteer "Green Team" of residents, students, engineers, designers, and representatives from environmental and health organizations to generate ideas, review plans, and share recommendations with town officials.

The resulting Green Street Project extends along seven blocks of Decatur Street. Its native tree cover cools and beautifies the street. The wind-powered street lights use high-efficiency LED bulbs that save energy, while the pedestrian and bicycle paths give residents safe, convenient transportation options and provide space for neighborhood children to play. The bike paths are constructed with porous bricks and cement that allow water to filter through instead of collecting on top. The most critical part of the Green Street Project is the water filtration system, which directs stormwater from storm drains and the sewer system to bio-retention rain gardens along the street. Combined, these features are expected to capture 90 percent of the street's stormwater.

Thanks to extensive citizen support and effective partnerships, the two-year implementation phase went smoothly. The town paid for 90 percent of the $1.3 million project with federal funding from the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Partnerships with landscape architects, horticulturalists, engineers, and other local experts helped to reduce the costs of the project's design and development. Local companies, 70 percent of which were owned by

minorities, performed all of the construction work. The project led to 50 to 60 construction jobs in the community.

“There is a misconception that smaller, working-class communities are not able to do great things,” said Mayor Ortiz. “However, we can implement innovations quickly and set an example for bigger cities.” Edmonston’s Green Street Project shows how a small project covering less than a mile can make a big difference in a community and benefit an entire region. Broader action is needed to stop the flooding in Edmonston, but because of their success, a neighboring town is already taking on its own green street project.

Section C: Strengthen Existing Communities

Many established communities—city downtowns, inner suburban neighborhoods, and rural villages—are rich in traditions, culture, and heritage but lack economic opportunities for residents. Investing in these existing communities rather than in new developments on the outer fringes of metropolitan areas can improve quality of life for low-income and overburdened populations by bringing the new jobs, services, and amenities they need. Revitalizing long-standing communities can help address the health hazards presented by contaminated properties, abandoned buildings, and poorly designed streets. This approach can increase the tax base to support other local needs. Prioritizing roadway repair and maintenance[72] and mixed-use, compact, "infill" development projects within towns and cities[73] can create more jobs per dollar spent than building new infrastructure and can avoid the need for costly new infrastructure and services to serve spread-out areas. Just as important, investing in existing communities allows residents to strengthen what they love about where they live. Done well, bringing new resources into existing neighborhoods can help preserve and build on the assets that make them distinctive.

This section introduces three broad strategies governments and community organizations can use to strengthen and revitalize existing communities. A "fix-it-first" approach to transportation, water, and other infrastructure prioritizes the repair and maintenance of existing assets over new construction on undeveloped land. Redeveloping vacant and abandoned properties can convert liabilities into needed amenities. Rethinking land use and transportation along blighted commercial corridors can help provide new opportunities for neighborhood businesses and expand access for low-income residents.

Providing housing and transportation options and improving access to opportunities and amenities are also important parts of strengthening existing communities. Since each of these priorities is supported by many specific strategies, they are addressed separately in Sections D, E, and F. All of these approaches will bring more benefits to communities when they provide jobs directly to local residents, such as in the construction industry. Ways to do this are described in the text box on minimizing displacement at the beginning of Chapter 3.

Fix Existing Infrastructure First

"Fix-it-first" strategies prioritize the repair and maintenance of existing infrastructure over the building of new infrastructure in undeveloped places. They are often applied to transportation infrastructure such as roads, bridges, and rail lines and water facilities such as sewers, pipes, and treatment plants. They can also be applied to housing, schools, and other buildings.

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[72] Smart Growth America. *Recent Lessons from the Stimulus: Transportation Funding and Job Creation.* 2011. www.smartgrowthamerica.org/2011/02/04/new-report-reveals-smart-transportation-spending-creates-jobs-grows-the-economy.

[73] Good Jobs First. *The Jobs are Back in Town: Urban Smart Growth and Construction Employment.* 2003. www.goodjobsfirst.org/sites/default/files/docs/pdf/backintown.pdf.

Investing in existing infrastructure prolongs its usable life, minimizes the need for costly repairs, and reduces failures that can jeopardize safety. Public investment in infrastructure maintenance signals a commitment to a neighborhood that can make the private sector more confident about investing there.

State and local governments can adopt approaches that direct resources to projects that take advantage of existing infrastructure and facilities. The Michigan Land Use Leadership Council worked with stakeholders such as the Detroit National Association for the Advancement of Colored People to recommend that the state adopt minimum standards for spending on road repair, prioritize the reuse of historic buildings and other existing structures when locating public facilities, and direct state and federal financial assistance to commerce centers with infrastructure already in place and relatively dense populations. Following those recommendations, Michigan's Cool Cities pilot program allocated priority funding to localities with plans to revitalize established areas and use previously built infrastructure.[74]

Reuse Vacant and Abandoned Properties

Vacant and abandoned properties can jeopardize residents' safety and encourage blight by attracting crime and reducing the values of surrounding properties. Cities and counties have developed diverse strategies for converting these properties into community amenities, improving neighborhoods for residents and spurring additional public and private investment.

Many municipalities and community organizations begin the redevelopment process by taking an inventory of all vacant properties in the city or neighborhood and prioritizing them for reuse. Indianapolis' Abandoned Housing Initiative assessed almost 8,000 vacant properties and, with the help of a HUD Neighborhood Stabilization Grant, directed resources to neglected properties with redevelopment potential.[75]

An area-wide approach that considers vacant properties in the context of comprehensive neighborhood plans can help identify uses that support the broader community vision. Some municipalities, such as Genesee County, Michigan and Cleveland, Ohio, have created land banks to acquire tax-delinquent properties, hold them until the market can support redevelopment, then rehabilitate them in ways that address local needs and strengthen the neighborhood.[76,77] When a property is targeted for revitalization, municipal programs, such as Cleveland's Repair-

[74] Michigan Land Use Leadership Council. *Michigan's Land, Michigan's Future.* 2003. www.peopleandland.org/Learn_More_Documents/MLULC-FINAL_REPORT_0803.pdf.
[75] The City of Indianapolis and Marion County. Mayor's Abandoned Housing Initiative Press Releases. www.indy.gov/eGov/City/DMD/Abandoned/Pages/press.aspx.
[76] Genesee County Land Bank. www.thelandbank.org.
[77] City of Cleveland. Housing and Home Improvement Building/Maintaining. portal.cleveland-oh.gov/portal/page/portal/CityofCleveland/Home/Community/HousingandHomeImprovement/BuildingMaintaining.

A-Home Program, can provide low-interest loans and technical assistance.[78] In less active markets, some cities have "greened" or landscaped vacant lots until there was demand for new residential or commercial space or for community gardens or parks. Over the past 10 years, the Pennsylvania Horticultural Society has worked with the city of Philadelphia and community organizations to green nine million square feet of vacant land by fencing, cleaning, mowing, and planting trees and shrubs. Work crews are neighborhood residents who receive training in landscaping so they can develop marketable skills.[79] In some cases, reuse begins with getting rid of unsafe and unsightly buildings. Some local governments have implemented aggressive code enforcement procedures to demolish buildings that are beyond repair.

Redevelop Commercial Corridors

Around the country, many commercial corridors are aging and blighted by abandoned gas stations and rundown strip malls. Despite this disinvestment, these corridors serve as important transportation routes and shopping destinations and are well-positioned for redevelopment as safe, convenient, and vibrant thoroughfares. Revitalizing commercial corridors can support existing businesses, bring new jobs into a neighborhood, and improve the safety and convenience of economical transportation options such as walking, bicycling, and public transit.

Effective corridor redevelopment includes two complementary strategies: restructuring the pattern of land use along the corridor and redesigning the street. Using the first strategy, local governments can use zoning tools such as mixed-use ordinances that put homes, shops, and workplaces close together so people can reach destinations on foot or by bicycle, or reduced setback requirements that bring buildings closer to the street and create a more welcoming environment. Using the second strategy, municipalities can make streets more attractive and safer for pedestrians and bicyclists with narrower traffic lanes that calm traffic, space for bike lanes and on-street parking, expanded sidewalks with street furniture and landscaping, and improved street crossings. The green streets and complete streets strategies described in Sections B and E can also help make streets safer and more inviting for users of all transportation modes. If public transit exists along the corridor, the local transit agency could consider upgrading service in areas targeted for redevelopment. Any transit improvements should include safe access for pedestrians.

Municipalities can offer incentives for redevelopment through relatively low-cost programs such as grants to local businesses for façade improvements that make the corridor more attractive. Because commercial corridors are comprised of many individually owned parcels, leadership from local governments is critical, as is involvement by developers, residents, and other stakeholders.

[78] City of Cleveland. Division of Neighborhood Services. portal.cleveland-oh.gov/portal/page/portal/CityofCleveland/Home/Community/HousingandHomeImprovement/BuildingMaintaining.

[79] Pennsylvania Horticultural Society. Community LandCare. www.pennsylvaniahorticulturalsociety.org/phlgreen/vacant-CLC.html.

The Grand Boulevard Initiative is a coalition of 19 cities, counties, and regional agencies as well as businesses, labor groups, and developers working to improve California's El Camino Real. The initiative is collaborating to implement zoning that targets housing and job growth around transit stations and key intersections, encourage mixed-use development with a range of housing and business opportunities, create a pedestrian-friendly environment with continuous sidewalks and good lighting, reserve traffic lanes for buses, and provide incentives to attract private development and investment along the corridor.[80]

[80] Grand Boulevard Initiative. www.grandboulevard.net.

Case Study: Restoring a Cultural Business Corridor – New Orleans, Louisiana

After the devastation of Hurricane Katrina in 2005, residents of New Orleans' largest Vietnamese-American community used social and cultural capital to rebuild their lives and neighborhoods. The Mary Queen of Vietnam Community Development Corporation (MQVN CDC) played a major role in post-Katrina rebuilding and recovery. Among its many accomplishments, MQVN CDC revitalized a main business corridor that preserved local jobs, kept the community intact, and restored the community's distinctive culture.

Located in the Ninth Ward, the Village de L'Est—known locally as Versailles—had 7,000 residents before Katrina. The community had its roots in the Vietnamese refugee resettlement that began in the 1970s. As in Vietnam, the church was the center of the community's religious and social life. During Katrina, the Mary Queen of Vietnam Church organized evacuations, connected residents who were displaced around the country, and helped bring people home. By spring 2007, over 90 percent of the Vietnamese-American residents had returned to Versailles.

The MQVN CDC, established in 2006, helped the community create a vision for rebuilding Versailles through public meetings, focus groups, surveys, interviews, and design charrettes. Responding to the needs identified through this input, MQVN CDC provided emergency relief assistance and began planning a cultural district called Viet Village. The community wanted to build a business corridor and create a strong sense of place based on Vietnamese culture. "Our overall goal after Hurricane Katrina was to rebuild and get the businesses to come back," said Tuan Nguyen, deputy director of MQVN CDC.

The resulting business development plan included four strategies for revitalizing the community's economic corridor and creating the cultural district. The Viet Village Collective Marketing Campaign created an area directory, map, resource guide, signage, and banners to attract customers. The Façade Improvement Program constructed business plazas and new façades for old buildings. The Technical Assistance Program delivered workshops on marketing and accounting to small business owners. The Viet Village Streetscape Project created a culturally inspired streetscape design and obtained $400,000 from the city of New Orleans for implementation. Altogether, the MQVN CDC has helped business owners find over $2 million in capital to rebuild or expand their businesses.

"It was a beautiful plan where the city took every opinion and suggestion that community members made into consideration," said Mr. Nguyen. "Community members even chose what type of trees will be planted. This is the first time that the city had ever done a project like this in Village de L'Est."

MQVN CDC partnered with many organizations, including the city government, the University of New Orleans, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, and ASI Federal Credit Union. Louisiana Economic Development, the Louisiana Disaster Recovery Foundation, and the city of New Orleans provided funding.

As a result of these partnerships, the business corridor has drawn economic investment, and the benefits are felt throughout Versailles. Said Mr. Nguyen, “Our food and what we offer out here is unique in the Gulf Coast. We want to open up the Viet Village and take it to a whole new level, in order to serve not only Vietnamese-Americans, but all of New Orleans.”

Section D: Provide Housing Choices

Affordable, healthy, high-quality housing is one of the basic elements of a sustainable community. It is important to provide decent homes in safe neighborhoods, convenient to jobs, good schools, and daily necessities for people of all income levels, family sizes, and stages of life. Having a variety of housing types, including rental apartments, townhouses, and large and small single-family homes, can ensure that everyone—from a young person living on her own for the first time to a working family to a retired couple—can find an affordable place to live. Achieving this range of choices might require affordable housing preservation or new construction, two broad strategies that are described in this section, or a combination of the two. Developers, local governments, and community organizations are key partners in these strategies.

Providing housing choices is central to minimizing displacement. Offering homes at a range of price points and making sure affordable homes remain affordable over time can enable low-income residents to stay in their neighborhoods if property values rise. Green building techniques can also reduce housing costs and are addressed in more detail in Section B.

Where homes are located and how they are connected to the rest of the community and region also have important implications for affordability. A unit built in an outlying area far from employment centers might be called "affordable," but it increases transportation costs for residents and isolates them socially, economically, and geographically. Truly affordable housing is convenient to job opportunities and other amenities and services, with access to economical transportation options such as public transportation and walking and bicycling facilities. Homes should be separated or buffered from hazardous land uses that could impact residents' health. Section B discusses strategies for accomplishing this. Municipalities also need to consider the vulnerability of areas with affordable homes to natural hazards such as flooding or wildfires, to what extent those hazards might worsen with climate change, and how they will respond if a natural disaster damages or destroys the homes. These considerations might change whether a community decides to renovate existing buildings or build new homes in a safer, but still well-connected, location.

When people of all income levels can afford to live near their jobs, their commutes are shorter, resulting in lower transportation costs, higher quality of life, and cleaner air. Providing homes that teachers, retail workers, public safety personnel, and other moderate- and low-income earners can afford ensures that a strong workforce is available to fill essential jobs. Just as important, inclusive communities with residents of all ages, races, incomes, and ethnicities are richer places for all people to live and raise their families.

Preserve Affordable Housing

The National Housing Trust estimates that for every affordable apartment built, two are lost to deterioration, abandonment, or conversion to more expensive housing.[81] Preserving existing affordable housing is essential to stabilize populations in low-income and overburdened communities. It is also much less costly than building new affordable units.

Communities have used an array of tools to preserve affordable housing. For example, deed restrictions allow an individual to buy a home for less than market value and sell it later below market value to keep it affordable for future buyers. Community land trusts administer deed restrictions and purchase and retain land for new affordable housing. Because land trusts typically maintain possession of the land while the buyer purchases the building, the home price remains stable without the inflationary pressure from rising land values.

Federal agencies, particularly HUD, provide considerable support for affordable housing. The federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credit, for example, allows an owner or developer to claim a federal tax credit equal to a percentage of the cost incurred to rehabilitate low-income rental units.

Housing trust funds are another tool city, county, and state governments use to pay for affordable housing initiatives, including repairs, renovations, and new construction. These trusts are created by state legislation and municipal ordinances. More than 625 city and county housing trusts operate in 40 states, generating more than $1 billion a year for affordable housing.[82] The revenue for trust funds can come from a variety of sources, including real estate taxes and fees, fees paid by developers, tax increment funds, and interest from government funds. Housing trust funds provide a consistent source of funding whose eligible uses are tailored to meet the needs of the community.

Other housing preservation tools include rehabilitation assistance and code enforcement. Keeping roofs, plumbing, and electrical systems in good repair can help homeowners, especially elderly residents, remain in their homes. Well-maintained housing is also at less risk of being purchased by speculators at bargain prices. Municipalities and community-based organizations can offer low-income property owners grants for rehabilitation, hands-on assistance, and education to help them comply with codes.

Create New Affordable Housing

Building new affordable housing is another way to expand housing choices for low- and moderate-income households. Three important tools to facilitate affordable housing development are inclusionary zoning, updated land use regulations, and Low-Income Housing Tax Credits.

[81] National Housing Trust. Affordable Housing Preservation FAQs. www.nhtinc.org/preservation_faq.php.
[82] Center for Community Change. Housing Trust Fund. www.communitychange.org/page/housing-trust-fund.

Municipalities can use inclusionary zoning to require that a certain percentage of new housing be affordable to low- or moderate-income households. In exchange, they can offer developers special allowances such as fast-track permitting or permission to build more units on a site than zoning would typically allow. Montgomery County, Maryland adopted one of the first inclusionary zoning programs in the country in 1974. Its Moderately Priced Housing law requires that 12.5 to 15 percent of the units in large new developments be moderately priced and that 40 percent of those units be offered to the county and non-profit housing agencies for low- and moderate-income families.[83] The program has produced more than 10,000 affordable units.[84] Washington, D.C.'s inclusionary zoning program mandates affordable set-asides of 8 to 10 percent of the new residential construction, or 50 to 75 percent of the additional units the developer is allowed to build in exchange for creating affordable housing, whichever is greater.[85]

Local governments can update other land use regulations to encourage the construction of affordable housing. Many codes and ordinances prevent or inhibit developers from building lower-cost housing. Regulations prohibiting multifamily and accessory units[86] and requiring minimums for lot sizes, setbacks from the road, building square footage, and parking can drive up the cost of land acquisition and housing production. In contrast, reducing the land area required for construction, reducing or eliminating setback requirements, and making parking requirements more flexible significantly lower costs for developers and consumers. Reduced square footage requirements and accessory units provide options for lower-income and smaller households, and accessory units can also house aging family members or bring in rental income for homeowners.

Communities can use the Low-Income Housing Tax Credit to finance new affordable rental housing as well as to support affordable housing rehabilitation. Tax credits go to developers of qualified projects, who can then sell these credits to investors to raise capital for their projects, reducing the money that the developer would otherwise have to borrow. With less debt, the developer can offer lower rents.[87]

Developers of affordable housing face several challenges despite the many tools at their disposal. One of the biggest challenges is finding available and affordable land, particularly in neighborhoods where land values are appreciating quickly. Before investments in a neighborhood drive land prices up, it is important for community and government stakeholders

[83] Montgomery County Department of Housing and Community Affairs. Moderately Priced Dwelling Unit Program. www.montgomerycountymd.gov/dhctmpl.asp?url=/content/dhca/housing/housing_p/mpdu/Summary_new.asp.
[84] Smart Growth America. Social Equity. www.smartgrowthamerica.org/socialequity.html.
[85] District of Columbia Department of Housing and Community Development. Inclusionary Zoning Affordable Housing Program. www.dhcd.dc.gov/dhcd/cwp/view,a,1243,q,647468.asp.
[86] Accessory units—also referred to as accessory apartments, second units, or granny flats—are additional living quarters on single-family lots that are independent of the primary dwelling unit (see HUD's *Accessory Dwelling Units: Case Study*, www.huduser.org/portal/publications/adu.pdf).
[87] U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. How Do Housing Tax Credits Work? www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/training/web/lihtc/basics/work.cfm.

to identify locations for affordable housing and acquire property while it is still inexpensive. Other challenges include gaining political support among local officials, which engagement by community members and affordable housing advocates. It can be difficult to ensure that affordable housing remains affordable over the years. This can be accomplished using deed restrictions and other affordable housing preservation strategies discussed above.

Leadership from local community development corporations can help create new affordable housing. With support from government agencies, non-profits, and foundations, CDCs have achieved successes around the country. The Umpqua CDC worked with the state of Oregon, the city of Roseburg, and the Local Initiatives Support Coalition to convert a former hotel in downtown Roseburg into a mixed-use development with retail on the ground floor and 37 housing units upstairs. With $3.2 million generated from Low-Income Housing Tax Credits, $1 million from historic rehabilitation tax credits, and other funding, Umpqua ensured that 33 of those units are affordable to very low- and moderate-income residents. In addition, several of the units provide housing for women from the Safe Haven Maternity Home.[88]

[88] Kimura, Donna. "Hotel project provides housing while rescuing city's past." *Affordable Housing Finance.* August 2005. www.housingfinance.com/ahf/articles/2005/august/032_AHF_12-3.htm.

Case Study: Bringing Transit Service and Affordable Housing to a Community in Need – Boston, Massachusetts

Boston's Fairmount Line commuter rail runs through underserved and densely populated communities in Dorchester, Mattapan, and Hyde Park. For decades, many residents living along the line could see the train from their windows, but it did not stop in their neighborhoods, and the nearest stations were well beyond walking distance.

"For residents of neighborhoods such as Four Corners in Dorchester, who currently bear the burden of hosting a diesel rail line without the benefit of service, the Fairmount Line is a textbook example of environmental injustice," said Noah Berger, the program manager at the Federal Transit Administration (FTA). Most residents of the communities bordering the Fairmount Line are African-American or Latino, and about half of the households earn less than $25,000 per year. Because 30 percent of them do not own a car, residents use public transit four times more than the regional average. The communities also have many vacant properties and brownfields, a problem made worse by a rise in foreclosures since the mid-2000s. In 2009, nearly 70 percent of Boston's foreclosures were in Dorchester and Mattapan.

In response to these challenges, four community development corporations (CDCs) representing Dorchester Bay, Codman Square, Southwest Boston, and Mattapan came together to form the Fairmount/Indigo Line Collaborative. They also joined the Greater Four Corners Action Coalition's transit equity campaign to advocate for new service and transit-oriented development along the nine-mile rail corridor. The commonwealth of Massachusetts, the city of Boston, and federal agencies have committed close to $200 million to construct four new stations as well as affordable housing, office buildings, and a greenway to better serve the residents and reinvigorate their neighborhoods.

The Fairmount/Indigo Line Collaborative partnered with Boston's Department of Neighborhood Development to develop the vision of how transit could improve access and mobility as well as catalyze economic and social renewal. The coalition wanted the Fairmount train service to operate as part of the city's subway network under the name the "Indigo Line." Community engagement involved a broad coalition of residents, community organizations, academic institutions, and foundations. Collaborative representatives handled competing neighborhood issues and presented a united front.

The collaborative was especially concerned that speculative property transactions and rising land values around the new stations would drive up the cost of living for current residents and push them out of the neighborhood. As a result, the plans for transit-oriented development focused on creating and preserving affordable housing. The CDCs are purchasing and rehabilitating foreclosed homes and acquiring, cleaning up, and reusing brownfield sites and other vacant and abandoned properties for housing development.

To further support opportunities for affordable housing and equitable development, the Partnership for Sustainable Communities provided technical assistance to the collaborative. The

Partnership is a joint effort between HUD, DOT, and EPA to coordinate federal housing, transportation, water, and other infrastructure investments to make neighborhoods more prosperous, allow people to live closer to jobs, save households time and money, and reduce pollution. The Partnership helped create a comprehensive inventory of more than 150 sites near the rail line and a site prioritization tool to identify opportunities to develop housing, retail, and green space. It also supported the refinement of a design concept for a brownfield located close to the recently refurbished Morton Street station that will include affordable housing and commercial space.

The FTA contributed over $135 million to support four new stations and the renovation of two existing stations. HUD provided over $50 million through Community Development Block Grants; the HOME Investment Partnerships Program; and Section 202 for public housing, new housing, and rental subsidies. EPA dedicated $720,000 to clean up more than 30 brownfield sites within a half-mile of the new and renovated stations and will provide technical assistance to a Green Jobs Incubator on a former brownfield. Other funders include the Massachusetts Department of Housing and Community Development, Massachusetts Housing Partnership, the Local Initiatives Support Corporation**,** and several local and national foundations.

The four new stations will open by 2013. The Fairmount/Indigo Line Collaborative expects to create 1,200 new affordable homes near these stations. The collaborative also estimates that the new stations will attract over 780,000 square feet of new retail space with the potential of generating more than 1,300 new jobs. Additionally, the collaborative plans to develop a 6-mile green corridor, which will include playgrounds, orchards, parks, a pedestrian and bicycle path, community gardens, and open space.

“We are working with residents to plan and create new urban villages along the line with mixed-use developments that include affordable housing and commercial uses,” said Gail Latimore, executive director of the Codman Square Neighborhood Development Corporation. “The Fairmount work is a catalyst for economic revitalization of our communities. While we have a lot more work to do, we are well on our way to transforming our neighborhoods and are serving as a national model for responsive community development.”

Section E: Provide Transportation Options

For many low-income and overburdened communities, public transit, bicycle, and pedestrian networks are critical links to the regional employment and educational opportunities that can help residents improve their lives. Transportation options such as reliable bus and rail systems and well-connected sidewalks and bike paths make it possible for people to reach a job in the suburbs, their doctor's office across town, or the grocery store around the corner safely and conveniently, even if they do not drive a car. Public transportation also creates jobs, and investments in transit create more jobs per dollar spent than building new roads.[89]

Expanding transportation choices can also save people money, a critical benefit for low- and moderate-income communities. Families living near public transit can own fewer cars—or no car—and drive them less, which can mean significant savings on gas and maintenance costs. While the average American family spends roughly 18 percent of household income on transportation and very low-income households can spend 55 percent or more, households with access to good transit service spend only 9 percent.[90]

When people can walk, bike, or take public transit, physical activity becomes part of their daily routines, which can help keep them healthier. Well-designed streets with sidewalks, bike lanes, safe crossing points, and good lighting reduce the risk of being hit by a car. Providing alternatives to driving can also decrease pollution from motor vehicles, helping to protect air quality, reduce asthma and other illnesses that disproportionately impact low-income and minority communities, and mitigate climate change.

This section presents three strategies that expand the transportation choices available to low-income and overburdened communities: providing access to public transit; designing safe streets for all users; and implementing equitable, transit-oriented development.

Coordinating the implementation of these transportation strategies with neighborhood planning can result in more accessible amenities and services and more convenient transportation options. The layout of development affects the viability of public transportation, bicycling, and walking. When homes, offices, stores, and civic buildings are located near public transit and close to each other, it is convenient to walk, bicycle, and take the bus or train.

Provide Access to Public Transportation

Public transportation is especially critical for lower-income people, older adults, individuals with disabilities, and others who might not have other ways of getting around. When making

[89] Smart Growth America. *Recent Lessons from the Stimulus: Transportation Funding and Job Creation.* 2011. www.smartgrowthamerica.org/2011/02/04/new-report-reveals-smart-transportation-spending-creates-jobs-grows-the-economy.

[90] Center for Transit-Oriented Development. *Mixed-Income Housing Near Transit.* 2009. www.reconnectingamerica.org/public/display_asset/091030ra201mixedhousefinal.

investments, decision-makers should consider the needs of these groups. Through public engagement, transportation planners can ensure that service hours and destinations meet residents' needs. For instance, weekend bus service might need to be expanded to connect low-income people with supermarkets.

Municipalities can make access to public transportation easier and safer through the thoughtful design of transit stops and surrounding streets. Waiting areas should be safe, well lit, and clearly marked. They should be easy and safe for patrons to reach on foot and by bicycle via sidewalks, bike paths, and crosswalks. Transit agencies should educate the public about their transportation options by translating schedules and brochures into local languages and placing them in schools, churches, businesses, and other community destinations.

Planners should consider the equity and health outcomes of transit investments at the beginning of the decision-making process using tools such as environmental and social impact analyses. They can also create accountability measures or indicators to ensure that transportation projects meet equity and health objectives. A common approach is to calculate transportation benefits by income group. Specific metrics can include average travel time for various types of trips, the number of jobs that are accessible within a given travel time, and average distance to the nearest transit stop, all analyzed for a range of income groups.[91] These can be monitored over time to ensure that transit investments continue to serve transit-dependent populations.

Much of the funding for public transportation is distributed directly to transit agencies, which then decide how to spend it. However, transit agency boards often include one representative for each jurisdiction served—usually multiple suburban towns and one city—instead of basing the number of representatives on population. This may result in more investment in outlying areas and less funding for urban cores where transit-dependent groups often live and where population densities generally better support the provision of transit service.

To advocate for the equitable distribution of funding, residents can participate in riders' councils and other advisory groups that make recommendations to transit agencies and engage the public. In 2010, the city of Seattle created a citizen transportation advisory committee to advise the mayor and city council on transportation priorities. The committee includes representatives from diverse communities as well as other equity and social justice advocates.[92] Non-profit organizations can also conduct community assessments to uncover information about specific transportation needs that can inform agency decisions, as described in Section A.

Implement Equitable Transit-Oriented Development

[91] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Guide to Sustainable Transportation Performance Measures.* 2011. www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/transpo_performance.htm.

[92] Seattle Department of Transportation. Citizens Transportation Advisory Committee III. www.seattle.gov/transportation/ctac.htm.

Transit-oriented development (TOD) is commonly defined as compact, mixed-use development within walking distance (usually half a mile) of a transit station. Residents of transit-oriented developments can choose to drive less because of the convenient access to public transportation and walkable streets. Equitable TOD offers a mix of housing choices affordable to people with a range of incomes. Providing affordable housing near transit can significantly lower combined housing and transportation costs, which can claim 55 to 60 percent of the household incomes of working families in major metropolitan areas.[93]

Equitable transit-oriented development uses many of the same tools that help create and preserve affordable housing, some of which are particularly suited to station-area development. Because TOD residents are more likely to use transit, municipalities can reduce or eliminate minimum parking standards in TODs, which can decrease the costs of development and allow more affordable housing to be constructed. Greater building height or floor-area allowances—sometimes called density bonuses—can accomplish similar objectives and work well near transit stations, where municipalities typically want more development. Land banking, described in Section D, is another viable tool. When a private developer is interested in building near a transit station, land bank authorities transfer the land to them with conditions guiding how it will be developed—for example, as mixed-income housing. Public and non-profit entities can acquire parcels early, allowing them to obtain land for affordable housing at a lower price and reinvest the benefits of appreciation in the community.

Transit-oriented development will not necessarily be equitable and affordable without careful planning by the municipality and involvement from the community. Developing in transit-accessible infill locations can be more time-consuming, difficult, and expensive than conventional development, so housing there is often built for the high end of the market. Local governments can remove barriers to this type of development and reduce costs by waiving or reducing impact fees, expediting permitting approvals, or donating publicly-owned land.

The Denver Livability Partnership, with support from a HUD Community Challenge Planning Grant and a DOT Transportation Investment Generating Economic Recovery (TIGER) II Planning Grant, is working to ensure that people in all income brackets benefit from the city's planned West Corridor light-rail line. In anticipation of rising land prices, the Urban Land Conservancy, a member of the Denver Livability Partnership, purchased a two-acre parcel along the line on which an 80-unit affordable housing development will be built.[94] The partnership also created a Housing Development Assistance Fund to award grants of up to $750,000 to fund affordable housing within one half-mile of transit stations and high-frequency bus routes. These grants ensure that the costs of developing transit-accessible housing do not get passed on to renters or buyers.[95] The Denver Livability Partnership's plans will more than double the number of

[93] Center for Housing Policy. *A Heavy Load: The Combined Housing and Transportation Burdens of Working Families*. 2006. www.cnt.org/repository/heavy_load_10_06.pdf.
[94] Cohen, Elisa. "West side partnerships forming." *North Denver Tribune.* June 1, 2011. www.northdenvertribune.com/2011/06/west-side-partnerships-forming.
[95] City of Denver. Transit-Oriented Development: Denver Livability Partnership. denvergov.org/tod/DenverLivabilityPartnership/tabid/438465/Default.aspx.

affordable homes near West Corridor transit stations from 1,400 to 3,000 units, building a foundation for inclusive communities that are linked to regional opportunities.[96]

[96] City of Denver. *HUD/DOT Grant Fact Sheet.* 2010. www.denvergov.org/Portals/193/documents/TOD%20SIP/HUD%20Award%20Fact%20Sheet-City%20and%20County%20of%20Denver%20Community%20Planning%20and%20Development.pdf.

Case Study: Equitable Transit-Oriented Development – Chicago, Illinois

Since 1979, Bethel New Life, a faith-based community development corporation, has catalyzed redevelopment in the underserved West Garfield and Austin neighborhoods of Chicago. In 1991, when the Chicago Transit Authority proposed closing the elevated train line that linked residents to jobs and services, Bethel formed a regional coalition to preserve transit service. Bethel eventually created a transit-oriented development plan that has led to the construction of Bethel Center—a two-story, 23,000-square-foot community center on the leading edge of equitable development and green construction.

Located five miles west of downtown Chicago, the West Garfield and Austin neighborhoods are predominantly African-American. In 1966, Martin Luther King, Jr. made national headlines when he moved his family into a tenement apartment in this area to fight for civil rights in housing, transportation, and public education as part of the Chicago Freedom Movement. After a series of riots in the late 1960s, the community declined after businesses closed and banks redlined neighborhoods, cutting off investment. The city's decision to close the elevated Green Line train would have been another devastating blow. "We had to respond to the closure because the train line is the only way people can get to work or visit their families," said Mary Nelson, founding president of Bethel New Life.

In 1992, Bethel formed the Lake Street El Coalition with other community groups, environmental organizations, and a few suburban townships and businesses. The coalition pressured local and federal officials to preserve transit service and kept their concerns in the public eye through press conferences, protests, and demonstrations. In particular, the coalition highlighted the disparities in federal spending on highways compared to public transit. After a series of hearings and meetings, the Chicago Transit Authority committed $380 million to repair the line. The Green Line's rehabilitation was completed in 1998.

After its victory, Bethel began to consider developing the areas around the transit station. "We realized the stop was a neighborhood asset and that 2,500 to 3,000 people a day got on and off at the intersection of Lake [Street] and Pulaski [Road]," explains Ms. Nelson. Bethel collaborated with residents, faith-based organizations, schools, public officials, and the Garfield Park Conservatory to create the Lake Pulaski Transit Village Plan. The plan proposed neighborhood revitalization strategies based on smart growth principles, such as compact building design, walkable neighborhoods, and access to public transportation. The residents also wanted a community center at the heart of the transit village.

For more than a decade, Bethel struggled to find funding to develop the community center on a particular site adjacent to the transit stop. The site had once hosted a gas station, whose leaking underground storage tanks had contaminated the ground water and soils. Bethel was turned down by three banks unwilling to finance loans on land with environmental risks but was able to get public funding from the city of Chicago's Empowerment Zone, the state of Illinois, and the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Community Services for predevelopment costs and small business development. The organization received

additional funding from private foundations and corporations such as the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation and Commonwealth Edison. Bethel also used New Market Tax Credits, a program designed to make investment capital available to businesses in qualifying low-income communities. With public and private money in place to clean the site and construct the center, U.S. Bank came on board. Altogether, Bethel pieced together $4.9 million for site cleanup and the center's construction.

Completed in 2005, the Bethel Center is a LEED Gold certified national model for green building. It houses six businesses, retail and financial services, affordable childcare, and an employment center that provides job counseling and job placement services. The Community Savings Center, with assistance from faith-based financial services organization Thrivent Financial and a U.S. Department of Health and Human Services program that matches contributions to savings accounts, provides financial education and matched savings accounts for home purchases, small business starts, and educational advancement. Bethel Center received the 2006 National Award for Smart Growth Achievement from EPA in the Equitable Development category.

The Bethel Center creates a long-term economic anchor at the Lake Street and Pulaski Road intersection. "When doing community development, one of the most important things is creating a sense of an economic future," Ms. Nelson said. "The center also made the transit stop much more usable and convenient." Ridership at the stop has increased 25 percent since 2004. Bethel and other organizations also worked to revitalize the surrounding area. The transit village now includes 36 affordable, energy-efficient homes within walking distance of the transit stop, parks, and stores. In addition to connecting residents to jobs throughout the region, the Bethel Center itself created about 100 new jobs.

Since its founding, Bethel New Life has helped bring $110 million of investment to Chicago's West Side, placed over 7,000 people in jobs, and developed over 1,000 units of affordable housing. Bethel has also become a national example of the role faith-based organizations can play in promoting equitable growth and community development.

Design Safe Streets for All Users

Well-designed streets allow safe, comfortable travel for pedestrians, bicyclists, motorists, and public transit users of all ages and abilities. Also called "complete streets," they often provide sidewalks, bike lanes, median islands, pedestrian signals, bus lanes, and plenty of crossing opportunities. Complete streets strategies can be used with the pollution-reducing green streets approaches described in Section B.

Not only do safely-designed streets make it less dangerous and more appealing for people to walk, bike, and use transit, they also bring economic benefits to communities. Streets that are more pleasant to walk along will bring more pedestrians to a shopping district. More foot traffic means more customers. Having slower traffic speeds can also attract customers because drivers have more time to see stores as they pass.

Local governments can implement some street improvements with minimal cost. For example, changing the timing on a walk signal at an intersection has almost no cost yet makes the street safer for pedestrians by giving them more time to cross. Where the state owns roadways, municipalities will need to work with state transportation agencies.

Many towns, cities, and states have adopted complete streets policies to ensure that both new and existing roadways are accessible and safe for all users. Kingston, New York teamed up with the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, the Kingston City School District, the local Cooperative Extension branch, and community health and environmental organizations to create a Complete Streets Committee, conduct a "SWOT" (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats) analysis of the local streets, and undertake a code audit to identify regulations that were hampering the city's ability to build complete streets. Kingston, almost 20 percent of whose residents live below the poverty line and 44 percent of whose children are overweight or at risk of becoming overweight, passed a Complete Streets Policy Framework in 2010. The framework describes approaches the city will use to advance complete streets and creates an advisory council to help identify projects, select design options, and provide policy recommendations.[97,98,99] Since Kingston and other New York communities have initiated complete streets efforts, New York State passed a Complete Streets bill that requires complete streets approaches to be considered in the planning, design, construction, and rehabilitation of roadways that receive federal or state funding.[100]

[97] City of Kingston. A Healthy Kingston for Kids. www.kingston-ny.gov/content/120/2336/default.aspx.
[98] City of Kingston. Complete Streets Committee. www.kingston-ny.gov/content/120/2336/2344/default.aspx.
[99] City of Kingston. *City of Kingston Complete Streets Policy Framework.* 2010. www.kingston-ny.gov/filestorage/120/2336/2344/rs11090dg_cs_policy_adopted.pdf.
[100] Seskin, Stefanie. "Excelsior! Complete Streets Will Be Law in New York." National Complete Streets Coalition. August 16, 2011. www.completestreets.org/policy/state/excelsior-complete-streets-will-be-law-in-new-york.

Section F: Improve Access to Opportunities and Amenities

All residents, regardless of race, ethnicity, or economic status, should have access to the basic ingredients of healthy, productive lives. These include employment and educational opportunities; services such as health clinics, child care, and public transportation; and amenities such as safe streets, parks and recreational facilities, and grocery stores and other places to buy nutritious food.

This section includes strategies for improving access to key neighborhood destinations that help address the challenges facing many low-income, minority, and tribal communities. Diverse, community-centered schools can serve as anchors for the surrounding neighborhood and important amenities for children and families. Safe Routes to School programs improve kids' health and well-being by enabling them to walk and bicycle to school. Incorporating nutritious food outlets and green space into the neighborhood can help reduce chronic disease. The strategies described in Sections C, D, and E are also important for creating access to opportunities and amenities.

Promote Diverse, Community-Centered Schools

A community-centered school is located near the families it serves; uses, expands, or adapts existing buildings; is accessible via multiple modes of transportation; fits well with the neighborhood; and has a relatively small footprint.

There are many benefits of community-centered schools for low-income and overburdened communities. Because community-centered schools are centrally located, students, parents, and faculty can get to them on foot, by bicycle, or via school bus, public transit, or driving. The availability of multiple transportation options can save families money. Children who walk or bike to school get regular exercise as part of their daily routines, and they can access playgrounds and school facilities after school, on the weekends, or during the summer, which encourages them to stay active in a safe environment. Children can spend more time playing and learning instead of sitting through long car or bus rides.

Centrally located schools can be community resources as well. Facilities can be used for events during non-school hours, such as adult classes, boy or girl scout meetings, after-school sports, performing arts, and voting. Some schools offer health, dental, child care, and employment services.

Community-centered schools can anchor neighborhood revitalization. While abandoning and demolishing schools in existing communities can result in decreased property values, the

presence of a local school raises property values and encourages more public and private investment in the neighborhood.[101] This in turn reinforces the tax base available to the schools.

Various decision-makers influence where new schools are sited, whether existing ones are maintained or closed down, and how schools fit into the community. School districts have direct control over school siting decisions. Local governments decide where other community elements, such as housing, parks, and sidewalks, are located in relation to schools, and make long-term plans for surrounding neighborhoods. Collaboration between school districts and local planners can help link school siting decisions to development plans, create better connections between schools and adjacent neighborhoods, promote the co-location and joint use of schools with other facilities, and better align comprehensive and school facility plans. States also influence where school facilities are located, often helping to fund renovation, maintenance, and construction of schools and providing siting and size guidelines. Municipalities can promote community-centered schools by working with state governments to remove minimum acreage requirements, which call for large sites often not available in existing neighborhoods; remove state funding biases that favor the construction of new buildings even if renovation is less expensive; and fund regular maintenance and repair, particularly of older school facilities in underserved communities.[102]

When promoting community-centered schools, decision-makers should consider potential air, soil, or water contamination. Uncontaminated sites that meet the important educational, economic, and community goals discussed above are preferable. However, such sites can be rare in established communities, and school districts are often faced with choosing among sites that have some level of contamination from prior uses or that are close to potential sources of contamination. It is possible to safely locate schools on those sites by evaluating the environmental and public health risks and benefits. EPA has developed school siting guidelines to help local education agencies, states, and tribes identify and implement site-specific and community-wide exposure and risk reduction strategies.[103]

Community-centered schools can have unintended effects on school diversity. Few neighborhoods are representative of the racial, ethnic, or economic makeup of their community or school district as a whole. As a result, schools whose student populations come only from nearby neighborhoods might be more homogeneous than those which draw from a larger geographic area. In other words, it might be difficult to have schools that are both diverse and close to residences. However, diversity, health, environmental protection, and community vibrancy are all important outcomes that can be balanced.

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[101] National Trust for Historic Preservation. *Helping Johnny Walk to School.* Undated. www.preservationnation.org/issues/historic-schools/helping-johnny-walk-to-school/helping-johnny-walk-to-school.pdf.

[102] National Trust for Historic Preservation. *Helping Johnny Walk to School.* Undated. www.preservationnation.org/issues/historic-schools/helping-johnny-walk-to-school/helping-johnny-walk-to-school.pdf.

[103] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *School Siting Guidelines.* 2011. www.epa.gov/schools/siting.

The long-term solution to this challenge is diverse, mixed-income communities where neighborhoods—and student bodies—reflect the broader population. However, in the shorter term, municipalities, school districts, and community-based organizations can explore other ways of ensuring that residents do not experience unintended impacts of community-centered schools. For instance, school districts and land use planners can consider both proximity to the families served and the diversity of school populations when making decisions about school siting, rehabilitation, and closure. Planners and school officials can also work together to promote neighborhood diversity near schools with development projects that provide mixed-income housing close to schools.

Create Safe Routes to School

Safe Routes to School programs are sustained efforts by parents, schools, community leaders, and local and state governments to improve the health and well-being of children by enabling and encouraging them to walk and bicycle to school.

In 2009, 13 percent of children 5 to 14 years of age walked or bicycled to school, compared with 48 percent of children in 1969.[104] Reduced physical activity rates are associated with obesity and chronic disease, problems that disproportionately affect low-income and minority children. When students are able to walk or bike to school, they are more likely to get the recommended 60 minutes of daily physical activity, which can help reduce childhood obesity and related health issues.

Relative to higher-income children, more low-income children do walk to school, some on busy streets with fast-moving traffic, no pedestrian paths, and dangerous street crossings.[105] Safe Routes to School approaches provide potential strategies low-income and minority communities can use to get more students walking and bicycling to school where it is safe and to improve conditions where it is not. Community members, planners, and school officials examine conditions and conduct activities that improve safety and accessibility and reduce traffic and air pollution around schools. Education programs teach students safety skills for walking and bicycling and teach motorists how to drive safely around pedestrians and bicyclists. Engineering projects improve sidewalks, crosswalks, signs, and signals to create safer places to walk or bike. Enforcement efforts increase awareness of laws protecting walkers and bicyclists and guiding driver behavior. Encouragement strategies such as contests and rewards help to create excitement around walking and biking.

Some elements of a Safe Routes to School program, such as Walk to School Days, signs, and painting crosswalks, cost very little money. Others, such as new sidewalk construction, require more funding. Congress has established a federal Safe Routes to School program that provides

[104] National Center for Safe Routes to School. The Decline of Walking and Bicycling. www.saferoutesinfo.org/guide/introduction/the_decline_of_walking_and_bicycling.cfm.
[105] Safe Routes to School National Partnership. *Implementing Safe Routes to School in Low-Income Schools and Communities.* 2010. www.saferoutespartnership.org/lowincomeguide.

funding to states; each state has a coordinator that dispenses funds and resources to local programs.

Each community can design a program that meets its needs. For instance, crime or fear of crime inhibits walking and biking to school in some places. Other communities have cited obstacles like abandoned buildings and stray dogs. To address these issues, residents could organize safety patrols made up of older students, create school route maps, and coordinate walking school buses or bicycle trains, which are groups of students accompanied by adults that walk or bicycle a pre-planned route to school.

The principal and teachers from Thomas Elementary School in Flagstaff, Arizona worked with the municipal health and parks departments and local law enforcement to address safety issues in nearby Bushmaster Community Park, a hub for activities that threatened students' safety while walking to school. A local business donated office space for a police substation one-quarter mile from the park. Volunteers asked local businesses to stop offering the individually sold bottles of beer that contributed to many of the problems in the park. The community also began weekly walking school buses.[106]

Provide Access to Healthy Food

Supermarkets often do not consider low-income neighborhoods to be profitable locations. As a result, these communities can become "food deserts" where residents, particularly those without cars, have limited access to healthy, affordable food. This lack of access to nutritious food is linked to the high rates of diet-related diseases among low-income and minority populations.[107,108]

Economic research, however, shows that low-income neighborhoods can have significant purchasing power and unmet demand.[109,110] Community organizations are building on these findings by conducting their own market studies and partnering with governments and businesses to bring grocery stores into their neighborhoods. Some have used financing tools to attract retailers, including New Market Tax Credits and private bank loans as well as federal and state grants. In New York City, the East Harlem Abyssinian Triangle development organization and the Abyssinian Development Corporation secured public financing that attracted private money to bring a supermarket to a predominantly African-American and Latino neighborhood

[106] Safe Routes to School National Partnership. *Implementing Safe Routes to School in Low-Income Schools and Communities.* 2010. www.saferoutespartnership.org/lowincomeguide.
[107] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Obesity Data/Statistics. minorityhealth.hhs.gov/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=3&lvlid=550.
[108] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Diabetes Data/Statistics. minorityhealth.hhs.gov/templates/browse.aspx?lvl=3&lvlid=62.
[109] Porter, Michael. *The Competitive Advantage of the Inner City.* Harvard Business Review. May/June 1995. Porter estimated that America's inner cities had roughly $85 billion in annual purchasing power (or 7 percent of total retail spending). In many neighborhoods, more than 25 percent of demand for goods was not being met locally.
[110] Miara, James. *Retail in Inner Cities.* Urban Land. January 2007. www.icic.org/ee_uploads/publications/Retail-in-Inner-Cities-ULI-ICIC-012007.pdf.

in Harlem. The supermarket agreed to give local residents at least 75 percent of the store's jobs. Since it opened in 1999, the store has met or exceeded industry averages for profitability.[111]

Grocery stores are not the only potential outlets for fresh and healthy food. Non-profit organizations can plant community gardens or start farmers' markets to bring produce from farms in the region. Community-supported agriculture allows residents to purchase shares from farmers at the beginning of a growing season in exchange for a portion of the crops. The farm either delivers directly to homes or distributes at a specific location in the neighborhood. All of these options provide opportunities for community building and education while supporting the local and regional economy.

Some state and federal agencies provide resources to improve access to healthy food in low-income and minority communities. In 2004, the state of Pennsylvania, the nonprofit Food Trust, and The Reinvestment Fund, a community development financial institution (CDFI), created the Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative. They committed $150 million to increase the number of grocery stores and supermarkets in underserved low-income urban neighborhoods and small towns.[112] The initiative provides grants and loans to qualified food retail enterprises for land acquisition financing, equipment financing, construction and permanent finance, workforce development, and other activities. As of 2011, the initiative has financed 88 new stores, creating or preserving more than 5,000 jobs and improving access to healthy food for more than half a million people.[113]

The U.S. Department of Agriculture maintains the Food Environment Atlas, an online tool that allows users to identify food deserts.[114] The Healthy Food Financing Initiative, a partnership among the U.S. Departments of Treasury, Agriculture, and Health and Human Services, is working to expand the availability of nutritious food, including developing grocery stores, small retailers, corner stores, and farmers' markets and equipping them to sell healthy food.[115] In 2011, the Healthy Food Financing Initiative awarded $25 million in grants through the Treasury Department's Community Development Financial Institutions Fund to 12 CDFIs working to increase access to affordable healthy foods.[116]

Provide Access to Parks and Other Green Space

[111] Flournoy, Rebecca. "Healthy Foods, Strong Communities." *Shelterforce Online.* National Housing Institute. Fall 2006. www.nhi.org/online/issues/147/healthyfoods.html.
[112] New Rules Project. Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative. www.newrules.org/retail/rules/financing-local-businesses/pennsylvania-fresh-food-financing-initiative.
[113]The Food Trust. Pennsylvania Fresh Food Financing Initiative. www.thefoodtrust.org/php/programs/fffi.php.
[114]U.S. Department of Agriculture. Food Environment Atlas. www.ers.usda.gov/FoodAtlas.
[115] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Healthy Food Financing Initiative. www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ocs/ocs_food.html.
[116] U.S. Department of the Treasury. "CDFI Fund Announces $25 Million in Healthy Food Financing Initiative Awards." September 2011. www.cdfifund.gov/news_events/CDFI-2011-18-CDFI-Fund-Announces-$25-Million-in-Healthy-Food-Financing-Initiative-Awards.asp.

Green space at all scales—from small neighborhood parks to greenways to forests and wetlands—provides health, social, and environmental benefits for low-income and overburdened communities. Parks, community gardens, playing fields, and wildlife refuges provide opportunities for physical activity, social engagement, and mental respite. These natural and cultivated spaces provide habitat for wildlife and serve important biological functions that purify air and water, lower ambient air temperatures, and can absorb floodwaters to reduce flooding in developed areas.

Coalitions of community organizations, land conservationists, planners, and public health groups are combining funding from local, state, federal, and private sources to create new parks, recreational fields, trails, and open spaces. The Bootheel Heart Health Project, a collaboration between the Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, built walking trails in 12 rural, predominantly African-American communities in southeast Missouri. Almost 60 percent of the trail users reported that they exercised more because of the trail.[117] In Chattanooga, Tennessee, community activists, the Trust for Public Land, and city officials partnered to create the Alton Park Safewalk to serve the low-income Alton Park neighborhood.[118] The urban greenway connects residents to the South Chattanooga Recreational Center and will eventually connect to schools, churches, and downtown Chattanooga through the planned Chattanooga Creek Greenway.[119]

Communities are designing green spaces in ways that respond to their specific needs, such as improving visibility and lighting where crime is a concern. The Olneyville Housing Corporation worked with the Providence, Rhode Island police department to design a park, playground, and bike path on a strip of long-vacant land along the Woonasquatucket River. By involving the police in the planning process early and using the principles of Crime Prevention through Environmental Design—a set of approaches aimed at designing the physical environment to deter crime—the housing corporation made siting and layout decisions that made the park and bike path easier to police and safer for users. As a result, these amenities are well-used by local families in what was once one of Providence's most dangerous neighborhoods.[120]

Municipalities can also update their comprehensive plans and zoning to conserve and renew important natural assets. Philadelphia's *Green City, Clean Waters* plan uses elements such as restored stream corridors and wetlands, rain gardens, and green roofs to meet federal

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[117] U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Preventing Chronic Diseases: Investing Wisely in Health.* 2003. www.muni.org/Departments/health/planning/Obesity%20Documents/Preventing%20chronic%20disease.pdf.

[118] International City/County Management Association. *Active Living and Social Equity: Creating Healthy Communities for All Residents.* 2005. bookstore.icma.org/Active_Living_and_Social_Equit_P1247C15.cfm?UserID=7333666&jsessionid=4e3049a2a14454137426.

[119] Chattanooga-Hamilton County Regional Planning Agency. *Alton Park/Piney Woods Community Plan (Draft).* 2010. www.chcrpa.org/Projects/Land_Use_Plans/Alton_Park_Plan/Alton%20Park%20Master%20Plan%20(5-12-2010).ALL.pdf.

[120] Local Initiatives Support Coalition Rhode Island. Riverside Gateway – Providence, Rhode Island. www.rilisc.org/Projects/RiversideGatewayProvidenceRI/tabid/154/Default.aspx.

requirements for stormwater runoff management. By 2029, the city plans to replace at least one-third of its impervious surfaces with green space to manage stormwater naturally and beautify the city.[121]

[121] City of Philadelphia. Manage Stormwater to Meet Federal Standards. www.phila.gov/green/greenworks/equity_target8.html.

Section G: Preserve and Build On the Features that Make a Community Distinctive

Authentic community planning and revitalization are anchored in the physical and cultural assets that make a place unique. As decision-makers and community stakeholders implement the policies and strategies described in this report, they should build on the distinctive characteristics of their neighborhoods. Preserving and strengthening the features that make a place special help existing residents feel at home, attract new residents and visitors, and spur economic development that is grounded in community identity.

Land use planning processes often begin with visioning exercises where residents identify the aspects of their neighborhood they like, from long-standing institutions to local traditions. Effective planning helps to preserve these features and strengthen them through future development. Celebrating a community's distinctive qualities can preserve neighborhood character, build local pride, and contribute to economic growth.

This section discusses two approaches for undertaking culturally focused planning and development: strategies for preserving existing features that define local heritage, and options for strengthening that heritage through new development. Together, these strategies can promote development that respects local history and reinforces community pride.

Preserve Existing Cultural Features

Preserving the cultural heritage of a place can mean maintaining its physical elements, including buildings, public spaces, development pattern, or natural features. It can also involve supporting a community's cultural assets, such as traditions, festivals, commemorations of history, and shared community memories. These institutions help define the neighborhood and its values, are a source of local pride and identity, and provide a foundation for community-based revitalization and economic development.

A first step in cultural heritage preservation is to identify features of the community that matter to residents and document their histories and importance. Community-based organizations can collect information that tells the story of a place or tradition through library and Internet research, interviews, and site visits. This information can be used to communicate the meaning of the place or tradition to decision-makers and the public. Public education can also build support for preserving cultural locations and events. Initiatives can include walking tours, seminars, celebrations or remembrances, place markers, museum exhibitions, oral history recording projects, articles, and websites.

The Selma to Montgomery National Historic Trail, created to commemorate the 1965 Voting Rights March in Alabama, passes several interpretive centers, museums, and monuments. Walking tours and other educational opportunities are offered along the way. While the corridor is now home to high unemployment, health issues, and lower educational and economic achievement, the existence of the Historic Trail is a catalyst for revitalization. HUD, DOT, EPA, and other federal and state agencies are working with local communities to clean up

former gas stations and petroleum-contaminated brownfields along the corridor, where residents hope to develop craft and gift shops, restaurants, and vegetable stands.[122]

Historic preservation can be key to preserving a physical place or structure. Community groups can start by identifying interested stakeholder groups; opportunities such as a chance to obtain ownership of a site; threats such as potential demolition; the parties with control over the property; and specific goals, such as getting a structure recognized as a historic landmark or securing financial support to restore it.

There are various ways of obtaining official recognition for a historic site and, in some cases, protecting it. Getting a building listed on the State or National Registers of Historic Places brings tax credits and protection in the form of extra scrutiny if a site is threatened, though it does not prevent demolition. After San Francisco's Bayview Opera House, the nation's first African-American opera house, was listed on the National Register of Historic Places, it received funding and technical assistance from the National Trust for Historic Preservation.[123] Local, state, and federal landmark laws, additional preservation tools, confer public authority to protect historic properties.

Some historic preservation programs focus more on architecture and aesthetics than on history and culture, which can create hurdles for places that are notable primarily for their association with an event, era, or tradition. To overcome this challenge, stakeholders must provide a well-researched history and show evidence of public support. Residents of the Bronx are working with the borough government to encourage the New York Landmarks Preservation Commission to declare the Bronx's *casitas,* or "little houses," city landmarks. *Casitas*, reminiscent of the wood farmhouses in the Puerto Rican countryside, might not always exemplify "notable" architecture, but they are vital elements of Puerto Rican culture in New York and have played an important role in neighborhood revitalization.[124]

Community organizations can also preserve a building by obtaining grants to renovate or restore the structure or raising funds to purchase it or obtain a long-term lease. They can also collaborate with schools, libraries, churches, and historical societies to identify new ways for the place to contribute to local life, such as offering performance or meeting space to artists or social groups.

Create New Development that Strengthens Local Culture

By taking inspiration from important landmarks, neighborhood designs, and local traditions, new development in a community can strengthen cultural identity. Design guidelines,

[122] U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *National Historic Voting Rights Trail: Selma to Montgomery, Alabama.* 2010. www.epa.gov/oust/docs/al_recact1yr_story.pdf.
[123] Smith, Matt. "Restoring Bayview Opera House Lifts the Area." *San Francisco Weekly.* November 17, 2010. www.sfweekly.com/2010-11-17/news/restoring-bayview-opera-house-lifts-the-area.
[124] Hughes, C.J. "In Bronx, Little Houses that Evoke Puerto Rico." *New York Times.* February 22, 2009. www.nytimes.com/2009/02/23/nyregion/23casitas.html.

neighborhood conservation districts, and neighborhood compatibility standards can capture the specific physical characteristics of development that determine the overall character of a neighborhood and apply them to new built projects.

With design guidelines, municipalities establish common standards for the form and character of a neighborhood or specific elements within it. They can be tailored to specific types of development projects, such as commercial buildings, multifamily homes, industrial facilities, or streets and sidewalks. Design guidelines can contain standards that address the building itself, including architectural style, scale, height, window arrangement, roof form, materials, and color; its relationship to the street, including orientation and setback; parking and garage configuration; landscaping; signage; and other elements. The Mississippi Renewal Forum developed a Gulf Coast pattern book to preserve the architectural heritage of the region as it is rebuilt after Hurricane Katrina. The book provides patterns for the restoration and new construction of individual homes, commercial buildings, neighborhoods, and landscaping. It describes traditional block layouts, housing placement on lots, building types, decorative elements, and materials, and offers recommendations for fulfilling Federal Emergency Management Agency requirements for the zone in a way that complements historic character.[125]

Local governments usually implement design guidelines with other plans and development regulations. These guidelines are most easily followed if they are clear and simple, and if design goals are illustrated with photographs and images.

Municipalities use neighborhood conservation districts and neighborhood compatibility standards, suitable for areas that are mostly built out, to ensure that new development and substantial modifications are in keeping with local character. Like design guidelines, these tools can address the characteristics of the building and its site. Planners could also create pattern books to establish the basic form of buildings and to show key architectural elements and detail. These books provide developers and architects with images of acceptable components of new development. By mixing different options, developers can create a variety of building types with a common architectural standard.

Kansas City, Missouri's Jazz District provides an example of a redevelopment effort that is grounded in cultural heritage. This district was once a flourishing African-American community and a hotbed of Kansas City jazz. Plans called for reviving its architectural style, streetscape, character, and vitality. The Jazz District Redevelopment Corporation constructed residential, commercial, and retail space designed to complement existing architecture.[126] The district has

[125] Mississippi Renewal Forum. *A Pattern Book for Gulf Coast Neighborhoods.* 2005. www.mississippirenewal.com/documents/Rep_PatternBook.pdf.
[126] Jazz District Redevelopment Corporation. *Development Opportunities.* Undated. 216.119.82.16/wp-content/uploads/2010/07/ICSC-collateral.pdf.

attracted commercial tenants such as the Black Chamber of Commerce, the offices of an African-American newspaper, a blues club, and the Black Archives of Mid-America.[127]

Design standards help create predictability in the development process for developers and community members. Guidelines for developers are clearly established, making their projects more likely to be approved and reducing costly delays. Community members can feel confident that new development will reinforce what they like about their neighborhoods.

[127] Jazz District Redevelopment Corporation. 18th and Vine Jazz District Rebirth. www.kcjazzdistrict.org/history.htm.

Case Study: Culturally Driven Land Use Planning – Ohkay Owingeh Pueblo, New Mexico

In 2000, Ohkay Owingeh's tribal members created a pueblo-wide Master Land Use Plan that encompassed all 5,800 square miles of Rio Arriba County. This long-term growth strategy coordinates future housing and commercial development and preserves the community's historic plazas. The plan both strengthens the pueblo's identity and protects its natural surroundings by keeping the traditional commitment to environmentally sensitive design. The Master Land Use Plan was the first tribal smart growth plan in the country and won EPA's National Award for Smart Growth Achievement in 2004.

Located 35 miles north of Santa Fe, Ohkay Owingeh, formerly called San Juan Pueblo, has a population of 6,750 people. Over the years, the pueblo has faced unemployment, water constraints, and housing shortages. Nearly 20 percent of its residents live below the poverty line, and there is a long waiting list for housing.

Through their land use planning efforts, tribal leaders realized that continuing to construct housing away from the pueblo's center would decrease the land available for agriculture and open space. The tribe's infrastructure systems, including those for water and wastewater, also were not able to keep pace with the pueblo's dispersed development. The water and sewer systems were at capacity and would not be able to provide sufficient water supply or pressure with future growth.

Approved in 2001, the Master Land Use Plan coordinates existing transportation and water infrastructure with housing and commercial development, preserves the pueblo's historic plazas, and promotes main street-style retail and commercial development. The plan's guidelines used traditional architectural designs that preserve Ohkay Owingeh's cultural heritage and foster a distinctive sense of place. With the adoption of the Master Land Use Plan, the pueblo also expanded the sewer system and installed two new water tanks to allow for future growth, putting a temporary moratorium on new development until the upgrades were complete.

The first project implemented under the plan was Tsigo Bugeh Village, a development of 40 affordable townhouses arranged around two plazas. The village was inspired by the original community design of the pueblo and includes a meeting space, playground, computer room, fitness room, and business center.

Collaboration among multiple organizations brought Tsigo Bugeh Village to life. For two years, the Ohkay Owingeh Housing Authority invited tribal members, elders, and tribal leaders to participate in project planning. This public engagement provided valuable input on community concerns, including affordability and safety, sacred geographic locations, and floor plans to accommodate feast-day rituals. "The Tsigo Bugeh Village project demonstrates that people can help create housing that meets their needs," said Tomasita Duran, the housing authority's executive director. "The project combines modern characteristics with our traditional design."

The pueblo built Tsigo Bugeh Village by making innovative use of funding from HUD, state and local agencies, and foundations. For the first time, HUD's HOME funds, which are block grants to state and local governments designed to create affordable housing for low-income households, were used for rental housing on tribal lands in New Mexico. In another first, the New Mexico Mortgage Finance Authority provided low-cost loans on American Indian trust lands. The Ohkay Owingeh Housing Authority also used federal Low-Income Housing Tax Credits.

Ohkay Owingeh's Master Land Use Plan used smart growth concepts such as affordable housing, walkable neighborhoods, mixed land uses, compact building design, and stakeholder engagement to restore the pueblo's traditional settlement patterns. As the tribe grows, it will use the plan to preserve its strong sense of culture and place for future generations.

Chapter 4: Conclusion

The strategies outlined in this document can help low-income, minority, tribal, and overburdened communities shape development to respond to their needs and reflect their values. These strategies can also help local and regional planners and policymakers make land use decisions that are equitable, healthy, and sustainable for all residents.

Making the most of these strategies requires open dialogue and meaningful engagement and leadership from the community. The options provided here can serve as a useful starting point for conversations among community-based organizations, residents, developers, and local and regional decision-makers. By building relationships among stakeholders and strengthening the inclusivity of planning processes, communities can create development that is fair, enduring, and authentic.

Resource Guide

General Smart Growth Resources

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Smart Growth Basic Information. www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/basic_info.htm. Provides basic information on smart growth and resources offered by EPA's Office of Sustainable Communities.

- Smart Growth Network. *This is Smart Growth.* 2006. www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/tisg.htm. Provides visual and descriptive examples of how smart growth principles have been applied in cities, suburbs, small towns, and rural areas. Also available in Spanish.

- Smart Growth Network. *Getting to Smart Growth: 100 Policies for Implementation*. 2002. www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/getting_to_sg2.htm#1. Provides 100 specific policies that local communities can use to implement smart growth principles. Also available in Spanish.

- Smart Growth Network. *Getting to Smart Growth Volume II: 100 More Policies for Implementation*. 2003. www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/getting_to_sg2.htm#2. Provides 100 additional specific policies that local communities can use to implement smart growth principles. Also available in Spanish.

General Environmental Justice Resources

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej. Provides basic information on environmental justice and resources offered by EPA's Environmental Justice program.

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Plan EJ 2014.* 2011. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej/plan-ej/index.html. Outlines a four-year roadmap to help EPA improve environmental and health conditions in communities with environmental justice concerns.

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Symposium on the Science of Disproportionate Environmental Health Impacts. www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/multimedia/albums/epa/disproportionate-impacts-symposium.html. Provides 14 scientific reviews commissioned by the EPA to examine why low-income, minority, and tribal populations are exposed to greater environmental pollution and experience greater environmental health risks.

- Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice. *Environmental Justice Federal Interagency Directory* (PDF, 52 pp, 886K). 2011.

www.epa.gov/compliance/ej/resources/publications/interagency/directory.pdf. Describes how various federal agencies work on environmental justice issues and lists key contacts in relevant federal programs.

- Federal Interagency Working Group on Environmental Justice. *Community-Based Federal Environmental Justice Resource Guide* (PDF, 126 pp, 3MB). 2011. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej/resources/publications/interagency/resource-guide.pdf. Provides information on federal programs that can help communities reduce toxic exposures.

General Equitable Development Resources

- PolicyLink. Equitable Development Toolkit. www.policylink.org/site/c.lkIXLbMNJrE/b.5136575/k.39A1/Equitable_Development_Toolkit.htm. Includes 27 tools that can help create vibrant and healthy neighborhoods, prevent displacement, and promote equitable revitalization. Provides descriptions, benefits, implementation recommendations, potential challenges, possible funding sources, and case studies for each tool.

- Glover Blackwell, Angela and Fox, Radhika K. *Regional Equity and Smart Growth: Opportunities for Advancing Social and Economic Justice in America.* Funders' Network for Smart Growth and Livable Communities. 2004. www.fundersnetwork.org/learn/resource-details/regional_equity_and_smart_growth1. Describes the concept of regional equity, illustrates its use by diverse groups across the country, and presents a framework for advancing it.

Minimizing Displacement: An Early Priority in Revitalization

- National Environmental Justice Advisory Council. *Unintended Impacts of Redevelopment and Revitalization Efforts in Five Environmental Justice Communities* (PDF, 40 pp, 284K). 2006. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej/resources/publications/nejac/redev-revital-recomm-9-27-06.pdf. Contains recommendations on avoiding the displacement that can follow successful brownfields cleanup and redevelopment.

- Urban Institute. *In the Face of Gentrification: Case Studies of Local Efforts to Mitigate Displacement.* 2006. www.urban.org/publications/411294.html. Provides case studies and strategies used by nonprofit organizations, for-profit developers, and city agencies to ensure that low- to moderate-income residents can live in revitalizing neighborhoods.

- National Trust for Historic Preservation. Main Street Programs. www.preservationnation.org/main-street/about-main-street/the-programs. Provides information and resources for finding and coordinating Main Street programs to stabilize and revitalize traditional commercial districts.

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. *Tax Incentive Guide for Businesses in Renewal Communities, Empowerment Zones, and Enterprise Communities* (PDF, 124 pp, 1.2MB). 2001. www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/economicdevelopment/library/taxguide2003.pdf. Provides information about federal tax incentives available to businesses in Empowerment Zones, Enterprise Communities, and Renewal Communities.

- Good Jobs First. Community Benefits Agreements: Making Development Projects Accountable. www.goodjobsfirst.org/publications/community-benefits-agreements-making-development-projects-accountable. Provides information and resources related to implementation, monitoring, and enforcement of Community Benefits Agreements.

Facilitate Meaningful Community Engagement in Land Use Decisions

- Smart Growth America. *Choosing Our Community's Future: A Citizen's Guide to Getting the Most Out of New Development.* 2005. www.smartgrowthamerica.org/resources/choosing-our-community%E2%80%99s-future-a-citizen%E2%80%99s-guide-to-getting-the-most-out-of-new-development. Focuses on the visioning and planning efforts that set the stage for smarter growth and provides tips for citizens who want to shape development in their communities.

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Public Involvement Plan and Toolkit for Las Cruces.* 2011. www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/pdf/LasCruces.pdf. Provides a menu of outreach and participation tools that invite and maintain the participation of diverse, low-income populations and others with limited previous involvement in community planning and design.

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Community Food Assessment. 2010. www.cdc.gov/healthyplaces/healthtopics/healthyfood/community_assessment.htm. Provides resources and tools for communities to conduct community food assessments and determine the locations of food deserts.

- Walkable Communities, Inc. Frequently Asked Questions. www.walkable.org/faqs.html. Answers questions about how to conduct walking audits.

- Fannie Mae Foundation. *Charrettes 101: Dynamic Planning for Community Change* (PDF, 12pp, 212KB). 2003. www.charretteinstitute.org/resources/files/BuildingBlocks4_1.pdf. Describes how to use charrettes and stakeholder analysis to improve public participation processes.

- U.S. Department of Justice. Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964. www.justice.gov/crt/about/cor/coord/titlevi.php. Provides overview and materials on

Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibits discrimination on the basis of race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance.

- U.S. Department of Justice. Executive Order No. 13166. www.justice.gov/crt/about/cor/13166.php. Provides overview and materials on Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency.

Promote Public Health and a Clean and Safe Environment

- National Academy of Public Administration. *Addressing Community Concerns: How Environmental Justice Relates to Land Use Planning and Zoning* (PDF, 229pp, 3.5MB). 2003. www.epa.gov/compliance/ej/resources/reports/annual-project-reports/napa-land-use-zoning-63003.pdf. Examines how local government decisions on land use planning and zoning can be used to address environmental justice issues.

- California Air Resources Board. *Air Quality and Land Use Handbook: A Community Health Perspective.* 2005. www.arb.ca.gov/ch/landuse.htm. Provides general recommendations for siting sensitive land uses and integrating localized air quality concerns into land use processes.

- Partnership for Sustainable Communities. *National City, California Recommendations for Ranking Properties with Nonconforming Uses in the Westside Specific Plan Area* (PDF, 25pp, 415KB). 2011. www.epa.gov/brownfields/sustain_plts/reports/property_ranking_process.pdf. Describes how National City is identifying properties with nonconforming uses, ranking them based on a consistent set of criteria, and developing amortization recommendations.

- National Environmental Justice Advisory Council. *Reducing Air Emissions Associated with Goods Movement: Working Towards Environmental Justice* (PDF, 48 pp, 1.9MB). 2009. www.epa.gov/environmentaljustice/resources/publications/nejac/2009-goods-movement.pdf. Recommends methods to reduce air pollution from goods movement and mitigate its impacts on environmental justice communities.

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Brownfields and Land Revitalization. www.epa.gov/brownfields. Provides information on brownfields laws, cleanup tools and techniques, success stories, and grants, funding, and technical assistance.

- Center for Environmental Policy and Management, University of Louisville. *Connecting Smart Growth and Brownfields Redevelopment* (PDF, 24pp, 725KB). 2006. http://cepm.louisville.edu/publications/PDF_docs/smart%20growth%20and%20brownfi

elds%20for%20website.pdf. Examines planning strategies, financing options, and institutional practices that can help promote brownfield redevelopment.

- U.S. Environmental Protecting Agency. Green Building. www.epa.gov/greenbuilding. Provides basic information on green building benefits, strategies, and funding opportunities.

- U.S. Green Building Council. What is LEED? www.usgbc.org/DisplayPage.aspx?CMSPageID=1988. Provides basic information on the Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) green building certification program.

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. ENERGY STAR Homes. www.energystar.gov/index.cfm?c=new_homes.hm_index. Provides information on EPA's ENERGY STAR New Homes program.

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Managing Wet Weather with Green Infrastructure. http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/home.cfm?program_id=298. Includes basic information, technical resources, case studies, and sources of funding for green infrastructure approaches.

Strengthen Existing Communities

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Essential Smart Growth Fixes for Urban and Suburban Zoning Codes.* 2009. www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/essential_fixes.htm. Provides information to help communities update their codes and ordinances to strengthen existing neighborhoods, expand housing and transportation choices, and preserve open space.

- Smart Growth America and Taxpayers for Common Sense. *Repair Priorities: Transportation Spending Strategies to Save Taxpayer Dollars and Improve Roads***.** 2011. www.smartgrowthamerica.org/repair-priorities. Describes the benefits of investing in road repair and preservation and recommends state and federal actions that would improve our transportation system while saving taxpayer money.

- National Vacant Properties Campaign. *Vacant Properties: The True Costs to Communities.* 2005. www.smartgrowthamerica.org/2005/08/01/vacant-properties-the-true-cost-to-communities. Summarizes research on the costs vacant and abandoned properties impose upon communities and highlights local programs successfully recapturing the value in these properties.

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Restructuring the Commercial Strip: A Practical Guide for Planning the Revitalization of Deteriorating Strip Corridors.* 2010.

www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/corridor_guide.htm. Provides guidance on coordination of public and private investments and planning and design strategies that can help revitalize commercial strip corridors.

- Center for Community Progress. *Land Banks and Land Banking* (PDF, 120pp, 2.8MB). 2011. www.communityprogress.net/filebin/pdf/new_resrcs/LB_Book_2011_F.pdf. Provides a step-by-step guide for taking control of vacant properties through land banking and leveraging them to spur smart development and meet community needs.

Provide Housing Choices

- National Neighborhood Coalition and Smart Growth Network. *Affordable Housing and Smart Growth: Making the Connection.* 2001. www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/topics/ah.htm. Uses case studies to illustrate strategies that can foster affordable housing and smart growth.

- National Housing Trust. Affordable Housing Preservation Frequently Asked Questions. www.nhtinc.org/preservation_faq.php. Provides answers to frequently asked questions about affordable housing preservation.

- Business and Professional People for the Public Interest. *Community Guide to Creating Affordable Housing* (PDF, 48pp, 938KB). 2005. www.bpichicago.org/documents/CommunityGuidetoCreatingAffordableHousing.pdf. Highlights a number of affordable housing tools that communities can use to create moderately priced housing.

- PolicyLink. What is Inclusionary Zoning? www.policylink.org/site/c.lkIXLbMNJrE/b.5137027/k.FF49/Inclusionary_Zoning.htm. Provides an overview of inclusionary zoning and considers the key issues related to implementing an effective program.

- U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development. Low Income Housing Tax Credits Basics. www.hud.gov/offices/cpd/affordablehousing/training/web/lihtc/basics. Provides basic information on Low Income Housing Tax Credits.

Provide Transportation Options

- PolicyLink, Prevention Institute, and the Convergence Partnership. *Healthy, Equitable Transportation Policy: Recommendations and Research.* 2009. www.preventioninstitute.org/component/jlibrary/article/id-118/127.html. Examines how transportation policy can help create sustainable, healthy, and equitable communities.

- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. *Guide to Sustainable Transportation Measures.* 2011. www.epa.gov/smartgrowth/transpo_performance.htm. Describes opportunities for transportation agencies to incorporate environmental, economic, and social sustainability into decision-making through the use of performance measures.

- Center for Transit-Oriented Development. Mixed-Income Transit-Oriented Development Action Guide. www.mitod.org. Provides a tool to identify the most appropriate and effective strategies for achieving mixed-income transit-oriented development.

- Center for Transit-Oriented Development. *Mixed-Income Housing Near Transit: Increasing Affordability With Location Efficiency.* 2009. www.reconnectingamerica.org/public/display_asset/091030ra201mixedhousefinal. Explores best practices for creating mixed-income housing as part of transit-oriented development.

- National Complete Streets Coalition. Complete Streets Frequently Asked Questions. www.completestreets.org. Provides answers to frequently asked questions about complete streets policies.

Improve Access to Opportunities and Daily Necessities

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